

Killing King Abacūs



for relations without measure

Killing King Abacus

To Kill King Abacus is to create relations *without measure*. If we aim to destroy capitalism we cannot reproduce its necrophilic logic which reduces relationships to numbers. To Kill King Abacus is to destroy the social net which privileges mediated transactions and images over direct relations. Because money is a general equivalent and thus is nearly limitless in its applications, it conquers other signifiers of value; capitalism transforms other value systems into itself. To Kill King Abacus is to disrupt this process of quantification. Money may be the most indiscriminate of whores but capitalism is not the only system which measures value. Justice, morality, law and culture itself are all value systems which weigh, judge and channel human action. We want to create relations which defy such equations. We therefore have no need for standardizing models within our struggle. In the absence of value systems desire shoots in new directions. Insurrection is desire rebelling against value.

In old England the body parts of the king were a basis for units of measurement. The king's foot was a foot. The king's hand span became a span. As the state became more standardized and impersonal so did measurement; and thus today we are ruled by an impersonal King Abacus who is without passion but always calculating.

The first clocks were built in order to regulate Islamic prayer, to make it possible to pray five times a day, at regular intervals. In colonial times the mission was used simultaneously to convert indigenous peoples and to impose the work day and week. The mission bells regulated both prayer and work. The clock was an indispensable instrument for the standardization of the work day. The rationalization of time has hurled us into a spiral of ever increasing haste. We wish to kill the king who tries to force us to pray to the god of work.

To Kill King Abacus is to create an insurrectional rupture with the existent organization of language, time and space; to speak our own language, take our own time, carve out a space for ourselves. If we can only conceive of ideas which are constructed in the language of the state or capital, we cannot break out of their restrictive logics. There can be no rupture with this society if we appeal to the authorities who perpetuate it, instead of taking action ourselves. In order to appeal to a system or an authority we must speak its language; the relations we wish to create cannot be spoken of in the language of authority. If we live a series of moments measured by the clock which ticks to the rhythm of productivity, we live abstractly equivalent moments of bland repetition.

As public space shrinks and is disciplined we are mostly left with space whose use has been restricted to the demands of production and consumption. While social theorists, anarchist, Marxist and bourgeois, have theorized the dimension of time (history) well, space has often to the detriment of theory taken a back seat. This is in part due to the influence of Darwinism and theories of evolution on 19th and 20th century thought. Space only reentered Marxism with Lenin's theory of imperialism and then, only at the level of the nation-state. Debates since that time have centered around national-liberation and colonialism. While space has recently begun to play a greater role in social theory, it still often falls into the framework of nationality versus globalism. This theorization of space both reaffirms and naturalizes the nation-state. We attempt to deepen our historical understanding of space and our spatial understanding of capitalism, as well as look at the relation between space, capitalism and the state on a different scale than that of the nation. Simone de Beauvoir noted the importance of the café for revolt. It was a space where we can directly meet, where we can talk to friends and strangers. Capitalism has begun to figure out how to transform a meeting place into a controlled space where we can only consume and rush on to work as we look at our watch. If we do not carve out a space for ourselves we will have no place to meet, to speak or to act for ourselves. In order to do this we must be capable of imagining that which lies beyond the dominant rationalities that perpetuate the existent.

One who ventures to expand life's possibilities outside of the limited options offered by the state and capital find themselves facing the power structures and systems of control through which measured existence is imposed. Work, law, government, school, police, commodity consumption...are a maze of barriers to anyone who wants to reach beyond these limits, to live by their own rhythm and not that of the clock. So those of us who want to project toward quality, towards a measureless fullness of life are faced with the necessity of destroying this maze, of creating our life projectuality in an insurrectional manner. We are therefore in permanent conflict with this society. To destroy these obstacles to our own expansion we need all of the tools we can get; we need both ideas and fire.

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Bey at all. And from this argument we are supposed to realize that religion is necessary to revolution. It is by such poetic rewriting of history that Bey claims to be able to save the concept of 'volk' or 'nationality.' "This concept was looted by base reaction and distorted into hegemonism of the worst sort, but it too can be rescued (an 'adventure' in itself). [We need to re-read Proudhon, Marx, Nietzsche, Landauer, Fourier, Benjamin, Bakhtin, the IWW, etc.—the way the EZLN re-reads Zapata!]" (45)

Bey's poetic history romanticizes cultural difference. Bey has called for a romantic Orientalism (are there other types?) that stresses the difference of the 'Orient' from the West. They were spiritual and we are secular and rational. This is the same argument that European Orientalism made over 100 years ago to justify its conquests. Bey's favorites are romantic Islam and Taoism. In this poetic history of firm cultural difference, the individual tends to disappear, as do some of those annoying facts.

Such romanticization, however, has little to offer a truly revolutionary movement. Instead, we need a critical history that exposes such romanticizations that help nationalist history maintain its dominance. Poetic history works with nationalist, mythic history in making ethnic-difference seem natural, fixed, and eternal. Critical history denaturalizes hegemonic history and allows us to imagine a truly different world as opposed to setting up the simplistic choice between globalization and nationalism. We must think outside of the dominant narratives that capitalism puts forth to us, and blinds us with.

Unfortunately, just as TAZ, with its implicit suggestion that anarchists wait in the cracks for the state to crumble, was an expression of the weakness of the anarchist movement in the late '80's, Millennium, with its more explicit demands that anarchists align themselves with nationalism, religion, and the state, is a measure of its weakness in the early '90's. Hopefully, with the recent upswing in direct action by anarchists such expressions of weakness may be left behind as historical relics of a movement that had temporarily lost its ability to imagine and demand the impossible.



Killing King Abacus

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All translations except Anarchists and Action and the Cortazar stories are translated by the editors of Killing King Abacus. All unsigned articles are written by the editors.

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Action

To choose to be an anarchist is to choose to create one's life in a certain direction. It is the development of a projectuality toward freedom, self-determination, the expansion of possibilities. Such a projectuality develops itself in action, but not the action of the activist, the politician, but action that flows from one's life and back into it. What distinguishes the anarchist revolutionary from a political activist is "the way in which the person, the comrade who carries out these actions, succeeds in making them an expressive moment of their lives, a specific characterization, meaningfulness, quality of life, joy, desire, beauty." What is absent from the actions of those who start and end with their own life, their own individuality, their own projectuality is calculation, the quantitative point of view, because it is a *quality* of life toward which the anarchist projects, a fullness of life opposed to the flattening this society imposes. If our solidarity with certain actions is critical, it is because we can see calculation creeping in. If we reject all cooperation with the media, it is because this power structure forces those who choose to participate in its activity to measure their words, draining them of substance, of energy of the force that refuses all compromise. Our actions create our lives and relations; for a life without measure, we must act without measure.

Anarchists and Action

By Alfredo M. Bonanno

From *Insurrection*, September 1989

If anarchists have one constant characteristic it is that of not letting themselves be discouraged by the adversities of class struggle or to be enticed by the promises of power.

It will always be difficult, often impossible, to find an anarchist comrade who has given into power. This might happen as a result of torture or physical pain, never by long spells of repression or loss of heart. There is something in anarchists that prevents them from becoming discouraged, something that makes them optimistic even in the worst moments of their history. It makes them look forward to possible future outlets in the struggle, not backwards to past mistakes.

An anarchist's revolutionary work is never exclusively aimed at mass mobilization, otherwise the use of certain methods would become subject to the conditions present within the latter in a given time. The active anarchist minority is not a mere

slave to numbers but acts on reality using its own ideas and actions. There is obviously a relationship between these ideas and growth in organization, but the one does not come about as a direct result of the other.

The relationship with the mass cannot be structured as something that must endure the passage of time, i.e. be based on growth to infinity and resistance against the attack of the exploiters. It must have a more reduced specific dimension, one that is decidedly that of attack and not a rearguard relationship.

The organizational structures we can offer are limited in time and space. They are simple associative forms to be reached in the short term. In other words, their aim is not that of organizing and defending the whole of the exploited class in one vast organization to take them through the struggle from beginning to end. They should not be weighed down by

ideology but contain basic elements that can be shared by all: self-management of the struggle, permanent conflictuality, attack on the class enemy.

At least two factors point to this road for the relationship between anarchist minority and mass: the class sectoralism produced by capital, and the spreading feeling of impotence that the individual gets from certain forms of collective struggle.

There exists a strong desire to struggle against exploitation, and there are still spaces where this struggle can be expressed concretely. Models of action are being worked out in practice, and there is still a lot to be done in this direction.

Small actions are always criticized for being insignificant and ridiculous against such an immense structure as that of capitalist power. But it would be a mistake to attempt to remedy this by opposing them with a relationship

perhaps Bey should speak with Kurdish anarchists before jumping on the nationalist bandwagon. One wonders where Bey would stand in relation to the war in Kosovo. He has already stated that Serbian nationalism is bad and Bosnian is good, so I suppose he would stand with the KLA nationalist government in waiting (for Bey, there is the added benefit that the Kosovo Albanians are for the most part Muslims). Unfortunately for Bey, the KLA are now aligned with NATO, a force for 'sameness' if there ever was one. The contradictions of nationalism begin to mount.

The State versus Globalization

Bey's anti-globalization ideology goes as far as to set up a facile opposition between globalization ('sameness') and the nation-state ('difference'??). Bey states: "Like religion, the State has simply failed to 'go away'—in fact, in a bizarre extension of the thesis of 'Society against the State,' we can even reimagine the State as an institutional type of 'custom and right' which Society can wield (paradoxically) against an even more 'final' shape of power—that of 'pure Capitalism.'" (96) While in TAZ Bey, unlike many other anarchists, was simply waiting for the state to 'go away' on its own, in Millennium he has decided that, since it didn't disappear, we could use it to fight Capitalism. Of course, in order to do so, we need to take over the state, to control it: Hakim Bey for President! Once our trusted comrades are firmly in power they will dismantle Capitalism and shore up the nationalist venture. Yet, while Clastres' 'Society Against the State' shows that society developed customs to oppose the concentration and institutionalization of power, the nation-state grew up working with capital from its birth. Unlike the customs of gatherer/hunter societies that work to defuse power, the nation-states laws and institutions are organized to facilitate and protect the accumulation of capital.

One of the central myths that much of the current talk about 'globalization' propagates is that the state is opposed to the global accumulation and expansion of capital. Somehow there exists a "pure Capitalism" which needs no state to protect its property system, guarantee its currency, mediate its disputes and contain social conflict. But to realign ourselves with the state and nationalism is to align ourselves with the reproduction of capitalism as a system and against a certain set of capitalists. There is no "pure Capitalism" that wishes the state would disappear. The logic of capitalist accumulation continually works to refashion the state as it develops and changes its needs. Bey seems to think that globalization is about to do away with borders and the state. Yet the reality is quite the opposite. While borders are becoming more porous to the movement of goods and capital, they are becoming more controlled in terms of the movement of people. This works to capital's advantage as capital needs to control and divide labor in order to increase exploitation. Without borders the poor could move from the third world where the rate of capitalist exploitation is highest and to areas where the living standards of the working class are much higher. Thus Bey's nationalism actually works hand-in-hand with capitalism to insure the maintenance of borders and the control and division of labor. It is no surprise, therefore, that ethnic-nationalism has become one of the organizing narratives of the '90's. It is the flipside of the narrative of globalization. These hegemonic narratives limit the imagination's capacity to think of a different world. Thus they contain and recuperate oppositional forces. It is for this reason that we must always be careful of setting up such simple dichotomous choices such as Bey's 'sameness' versus 'difference' or globalization versus nationalism. We must demand what has been made to seem as impossible instead off falling into ready-made categories of thought.

Poetic History

Bey's theories are grounded in history; unfortunately, his post-modern "poetic history" has more akin to myth than to a radical, critical history. The pirates of North Africa become "pirate utopias" without mention of the fact that their ships were, for the most part, powered by slaves at the oar (sounds like Bookchin's utopic slave society of the Ancient Greek city states). Col. Qaddafi's "Green Path" is part neo-Sufism, part anarcho-syndicalism.(44) The hierarchically organized, ethnic-nationalist Tong in China becomes an inspiration. And religion becomes revolutionary. Bey goes so far to state that "...it seems clear that without religion there will be no radical revolution." (84) The history of the Tong is rewritten or badly read by Bey to make them Taoists who supposedly collaborated with anarchists in the 1911 revolution in China. (84) The weak connection between the Tong and Taoism is about as weak as the connection between the Tong and the anarchists. We also shouldn't forget that the 1911 revolution was a nationalist revolution, something that doesn't bother

The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism among Anarchists A review of Hakim Bey's *Millennium*

According to Hakim Bey, he wrote *Millennium* to answer to the question of whether he still holds the position he staked out in TAZ. By reading *Millennium* we can both understand Bey's current theoretical position and how he placed TAZ in the first place. First off, Bey notes that between the two books the world changed: the Soviet Union fell apart. This has radical implications for anarchists. Before the fall, anarchists were the "third way" (not to be confused with Tony Blair's Third Way) and the real opposition to Capital was the Soviet Union. With the Soviet dissolution, anarchism has become the other of Capital. Where as when anarchism was the third way, anarchists could hang out in the cracks creating Temporary Autonomous Zones and not really confronting Capital or the State, we no longer have that luxury. Bey admits that it took him some time to realize the difference that this made; in fact, in the early nineties he still counseled anarchists that the present was like the Dark Ages and, as with the mystics and monks Bey so loves, we should hang out and meditate in the monasteries until they are over. It seems that it took the Zapatistas to wake Bey to the implications of anarchism becoming the primary opposition to Capital. In *Millennium*, Bey concludes that TAZ is no longer an option, now we must leave the monasteries and begin the Jihad (the revolution).

But what is this Jihad Bey has declared? With a jumble of badly digested academic, post-colonial theory, the writings of Deleuze and Guattari, Islam and the sound-bytes of Subcommander Marcos, Bey paints a colonial picture of our 'newly' globalized world. In Bey's world, capitalism and the state are no longer the central enemies (in fact, they begin to drop out of Bey's analysis, as capital no longer exploits or alienates, it only produces 'sameness'); instead, colonialism in the form of globalization that produces 'sameness' (homogenization) is what we must confront with a revolution of 'difference.' With this logic, the form revolution must take to protect difference, to fight colonialism, is national liberation. Thus, Bey's acritical support for the EZLN revolt (a revolt Bey joyfully calls the first postmodern revolution).

For Bey, difference is constituted by ethnic nationalism. Accordingly, we need to understand the "revolutionary implication of culture." (43) Or, more directly, Bey states, "...true organic integral difference is revolutionary, now. It has to be, because it's opposed to the single world, the mono-world, the mono-culture of capital." (25) We have to ask, however, what is "true" or "organic" about ethnic nationalities? One of the central problems with Bey's anti-colonial outlook is that it tends to naturalize nationalities and thus nationalism. It makes them seem natural and eternal instead of historically specific and socially constructed. Contra Bey's reading, nationalities are produced at certain times and by certain forces. And, instead of just assuming they are eternal and fixed, as Bey simplistically does, we need to pay attention to how such ethnic differences come to be created and articulated by political and social actors for particular reasons.

Bey does allow for "positive" and "negative" difference or particularities (nationalities). Positive or "true" nationalities are those that aren't imperialistic (those that stay in their borders and don't dominate their minorities). Bey offers the examples of the Zapatistas, Bosnia, Slovenia, Macedonia, the Ukraine, the Kurds and the Chechens as positive nationalities and nationalisms; and, he cites the Serbs and Russia as negative or hegemonic particularities. Yet in fine New York Times style, these nationalities in and of themselves remain unquestioned. This is the weakness of Bey's sameness/difference dichotomy, in which, he tells us, we have to choose one or the other. Thus instead of acting in revolutionary solidarity with the struggle against the state and capital, we should choose difference or nationalism (versus globalization), and try to influence it to take the non-imperialist, nice form of nationalism.

The Poverty of Choice

Bey's either/or choice is an expression of the poverty of imagination inherent in much anti-globalization rhetoric: sameness or difference, globalization or nationalism. Thus Bey says, "...one cannot help but supporting Chechnya and the Kurds." (100) We can't help it, or as he also says, "we have to choose...." In Chechnya nationalists have begun to institute Shariat law and the death penalty (of course, for Bey, law and the Shariat have been redefined as no less than "the open road of the aimless wanderer." (41)). Kurdish nationalists have been crushing all internal dissent for years;

based on quantity rather than extending these small actions, which are easy for others to repeat. The clash is significant precisely because of the enemy's great complexity which it modifies constantly in order to maintain consensus. This consensus depends on a fine network of social relations on all levels. The smallest disturbance damages it far beyond the limits of action itself. It damages its image, its program, the mechanisms that produce social peace and the unstable equilibrium of politics.

Each tiny action that comes from even a small number of comrades, is in fact a great act of subversion. It goes far beyond the often microscopic dimensions of what took place, becoming not so much a symbol as a point of reference.

This is the sense in which we have often spoken of insurrection. We can start building our struggle in such a way that conditions of revolt can emerge and latent conflict can develop and be brought to the fore. In this way a contact is established between the anarchist minority and

the specific situation where the struggle can be developed.

We know that many comrades do not share these ideas. Some accuse us of being analytically out of date, others of not seeing that circumscribed struggle only serves the aims of power, arguing that, especially now in the electronic era, it is no longer possible to talk of revolt.

But we are stubborn. We believe it is still possible to rebel today, even in the computer era.

It is still possible to penetrate the monster with a pinprick. But we must move away from the stereotypical images of the great and mass struggles, and the concept of the infinite growth of a movement that is to dominate and control everything. We must develop a more precise and detailed way of thinking. We must consider reality for what it is, not what we imagine it to be. When faced with a situation we must have a clear idea of the reality that surrounds us, the class clash that such a reality reflects, and provide ourselves with the necessary means in order to act on it.

As anarchists we have models of intervention and ideas that are of great importance and revolutionary significance, but they do not speak for themselves. They are not immediately comprehensible, so we must put them into action, it is not enough to simply explain them.

The very effort of providing ourselves with the means required for the struggle should help to clarify our ideas, both for ourselves and for those who come into contact with us. A reduced idea of these means, one that limits itself to simply counter-information, dissent and declarations of principle, is clearly inadequate. We must go beyond that and work in three directions: contact with the mass (with clarity and circumscribed to the precise requirements of the struggle); action with the revolutionary movement (in the subjective sense already mentioned); construction of the specific organization (functional to both work with the mass and to action within the revolutionary movement).

And we need to work very hard in this direction.

Elves and lit up signs

We print the most recent ELF communiqués below in solidarity with the elves of the night. There has been an upsurge of ELF activity in the past two years. These actions have been a blow to the companies targeted, raising the insurance premiums of capitalist scum!! The ELF is not a group; anyone can choose to claim an action with that name. Those who claim ELF actions may not know others who do the same. But why does anyone use the ELF name at all? When an action is claimed by the ELF a rebellious action is reduced from multiple and dynamic motivations to a single cause. This reduction is partially achieved by the person who signs ELF, in doing so she reduces an action (potentially) against capital in general to an action against particularly environmentally offensive companies: the name Earth Liberation Front states its focus as explicitly on the environment. The ELF by definition specializes its rebellion. Or the action is reduced by the media, to an action perpetrated by the most monstrous of eco-terrorists: an action becomes an image. Of course the media will do this regardless in any case of sabotage, but the ELF has a specific image and a media spokesperson that unintentionally contributes to its perpetuation. So the use of the name ELF has become part of the media circus. Their spokesperson has surely explain ELF actions from his own point of view, but not surprisingly, the media insists on the images which are most useful to its aims. ELF actions are an example of sabotage accomplished with easily accessible materials and means, yet these actions have caused considerable damage! This shows us that we could so the same.

For us the individual that rebels, the individual that revolts against this world that is too petty to contain his dreams, is not interested in limiting his own potentiality, but if possible, would extend it to infinity. Thirsty for freedom, greedy for experience, he who revolts is in constant search for new affinities, for new instruments to experiment with, with which to assault the existent and subvert it from its very foundation. This is because the insurrectional struggle should find stimulus and energy in our capacity to always fill its arsenal with new arms, outside and against any reductive specialization. The gun experts are like the book experts, or squatting experts, or any others; they are boring because they always talk and only

about themselves and about their favorite means. And this is why we don't give privilege to any instrument over others, we love and support innumerable actions, use the most disparate means, that daily occur against domination and its structures. Because revolt is like poetry: and should be done by everyone, not by only one person, he who is the most expert.

And therefore this clash... loses any liberatory significance, any breath of life, when all of its upsurge is reduced to the promotion of a program and an acronym that is bought in the market of politics... To he who has no commodities to sell, of what use are lit up signs?

-Canenero

Recent ELF Communiques:

Greetings from the Earth Liberation Front.

We are claiming responsibility for the second attack upon C S McRossan's machinery. In the early morning hours of Sun, Oct 3 ('99), the ELF entered the construction site on highway 55 in Minneapolis where the company is working. Machines that were found with accessible holes had sand poured into the oil, the draining of them. Three machines had hoses and wires cut before the elves escaped into the night. This follows an attack earlier in the week on Mon Sept 27 when a visit was paid to CS McRossan's offices in Maple Grove, where we slashed conveyor belts and damaged machinery. We see highway 55 as symbolic of the larger system that is strangling us of our air and water. The NAFTA superhighway and the roads into the forests are all a symptom of the sick capitalist system that puts profits before people or ecosystems. As long as the trees continue to fall, so will the profits made of this project. This is just the beginning of a new level of battling against highway 55 and car culture. We urge the elves of MN and the world to unite against the profit hauling infrastructures around the globe. Target machines, offices, and equipment used to build roads. We are everywhere and we are watching. We will be back.

Boise Cascade has been very naughty. After ravaging the forests of the Pacific Northwest, Boise Cascade now looks toward the virgin forests of Chile. Early Christmas morning ('99), elves left coal in Boise Cascade's stocking. Four buckets of diesel and gas with kitchen timer delay destroyed their regional headquarters in Monmouth, Oregon. Let this be a lesson to all multinational corporations who don't respect their ecosystems. The elves are watching.

In the early hours of February, 9 the Earth Liberation Front paid a visit to Green Hall at the University of Minnesota in St. Paul, MN. The target was transgenic oat research crops. The research was being done by University professors David Sommers and Howard Rines. All the oats found in the greenhouse were destroyed, messages were spray painted, and the locks were glued on the way out. Oat research is simply one of the projects that the University is taking part in, in partnership with gross corporations that are adding to the destruction of the Earth. Let this action be a warning to the University of Minnesota and the entire biotech industry, that if you continue to destroy the biodiversity on the Earth your projects will continue to fail.

The elves are always watching. Stop genetic engineering or we will.
For Freedom and Wilderness,
Earth Liberation Front



time, watching adventure on TV, the suburbanite resorts to control over nature where he lacks control over his own life. Therefore we observe bushes trimmed into squares, a neurosis for mowing lawns and meticulously planted rows of flowers. Garden stores have proliferated and the suburban yard has become nature as commodity. The suburban yard, the lies on television and 17 choices of toothpaste all helped perpetuate the illusion of the American dream. The American dream is lifeless and as uniform as the suburban lawn; it is produced by the television instead of by subjects that intervene in life in order to transform it. The American dream hides the degrading reality of a processed life from those "lucky" enough to afford it. Where private property reigns the ownership of one's living space, work-space, and just about every other space by capitalists the property poor individual is perpetually constrained. Suburbs conceal alienation from nature and other human beings as well as the lack of power that suburbanites exercise over their own lives at home and at work.

The separate ownership of living and working spaces divides opposition to Capital into labor and rent struggles. On the other hand, the illusion of homeownership (getting bank loans to buy a house) gave millions of workers a vested interest in the system of private property, and diffused any potential struggle against landlords. This has resulted in community action to protect the property values in a given area. Workers have organized to keep other workers out of their neighborhoods. When millions of blacks moved to northern cities, white neighborhoods tried to prevent blacks from moving into their neighborhoods in order to protect their property values. This "community" action is in many cases the action of illusory communities. The average suburbanite or city dweller doesn't know many of her neighbors. When she chooses to take community action to protect her property value, this is a "community" connection based on

money, and seldom on direct human connections.

While Haussmann's Paris served to create an image of the capitol of a powerful empire, city revitalization projects create an image of the new "beautified" city that is sold to us under the guise of community pride. In both of these examples this was achieved through the displacement of the poor. The "community" is sold to us with citywide celebrations, city fairs or official Millennium celebrations. The State and the media help create and perpetuate these imagined communities, that is, communities which lack commonality based on direct human relations but are instead based on an abstract conception of common identity, the most obvious example of this is the Nation. Capitalism destroys human connections but it replaces this vacuum with imagined communities.

Haussmann built boulevards to prevent the construction of barricades and completely destroyed the neighborhoods where insurrection was most likely to occur. These neighborhoods reappeared in a different form in the suburbs. North American suburbs are built so that few direct relationships of the sort that Haussmann paved over ever develop. Communication is as much a threat to state control as barricades. In the suburbs, houses are far from shopping areas, places to socialize, and work places. Meanwhile the suburbanite is sold the idea that she likes this on TV, and is bought off with excessive consumption. The suburbanite is lost alone in a labyrinth of reflections. Unable to find anyone to discuss anything of substance with, she is left with only images for companions. While the suburbs were being designed to placate and stupefy, the inner cities were becoming increasingly marginalized economically. Haussmann destroyed slums to prevent insurrection, but in the U.S. slums sprouted up right in the shadow of the American dream. During the Rodney King Riots, suburbanites watched the adventure on TV.

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more hours of work and more travel time to and from work, there was less time to socialize.

Let's not forget that the separation between work and leisure time is accompanied by the separation between living and working spaces. Industrialization and the subsequent proletarianization of large sectors of the population created this separation on a mass scale. Peasants had worked at or near home, those that had worked and lived in separate quarters generally found that the distance between these 2 points increased with industrialization. The increasing partition of time into working and living in separate spaces effected customary meal times, household labor and its sexual division, family relations and leisure activities. This separation began a process of increased dependence on consumer goods for previously home produced items. The creation of suburbs increased the distance of this separation. This separation corrodes the type of relationships that could form a basis for attacks on the established order. This separation organizes the spatial and temporal imposition of consumption and production. The prevalence of the spatial and temporal separation between work and 'life' was born with industrialization but has come to appear timeless and natural. This naturalness of this separation kills the passion for freedom by limiting our capacity to imagine any other organization of space and time than the repetitive constriction which capital imposes on us.

North American Suburbs: the paved dream.

Before World War II, the U.S. was already a highly industrialized country. Thus, the conditions I describe above were already common to North American cities. From the 30s on, the distance dividing living and working spaces increased exponentially as millions of Americans moved to the suburbs, highways were built and millions of

Americans bought cars in an attempt to close this increasing distance.

The federal government employed millions in the thirties to build a new landscape. After WWII the Veteran's Mortgage Guarantee Program provided low cost housing to millions of people. From the late 40s to the mid-60s developers built 23 million new homes. Industry followed these mostly white new suburbanites out of the city, partly because unions were weaker there. In the 40s and 50s the government invested millions of dollars on the suburban infrastructure: gas, electricity, roads, sewer systems and highways. They built thousands of roads and highways allowing for easy movement between suburbs and city centers. Poor neighborhoods were unable to resist the construction of highways through their neighborhoods whereas rich neighborhoods had the clout to prevent this from happening. One more recent example of this is the construction of a highway in South Central Los Angeles while the rich of Beverly Hills were able to stop the construction of a highway in their neighborhood.

The defense department spent millions of dollars on freeways after the war. Just as Haussmann's boulevards were strategically useful to the military, highways could potentially be used as runways to land bombers. More significant though was the alliance between, car companies, the oil and rubber industries that lobbied for the construction of highways, and the state. These companies used the coercive power of the built environment to insure the consumption of their products. Suburbanization was a perfect accompaniment to the construction of roads, highways, and mass produced automobiles. Greater distances between work and home along with terrible public transportation (again thanks to the friendship between government and car and oil companies) created a need for automobiles.

Alienation is built into the city and into the suburbs, in its concrete and asphalt. Take the example of Los Angeles, the city built to accommodate cars but not walking human beings. In LA many people think nothing of driving 45 minutes just to go a bar to have a drink. Instead of having neighborhoods where one finds a whole street of bars or cafes, places to socialize are spread out over the city. North American cities lack any pre-capitalist history; they were built from the beginning by the dictates of capital, with government help. The result: urban blights that are more adapted to the automobile than the human being.

Unfortunately cities that predate capitalism can be also transformed into concrete monsters. In Torino, Italy the gigantic FIAT plant began assembly line mass production based on Ford's model decades before the rest of Europe. The result is the same as occurred in U.S. cities: mass production needed mass consumption to perpetuate itself, a cityscape was built that conformed to the requirements of accumulation. Someone had to buy the cars, to make this possible the car companies made sure that roads were built. Torino is a rare European example of the results of the dominion of a car company and its allies over a cityscape. Concrete partitions between seemingly endless apartments and a proliferation of roads have surrounded the walkable narrow streets of the old city. The FIAT plant employed a large percentage of Torino's residents for many decades. The employees were scattered throughout the city while the FIAT was in one location, the result: *auto, boulot, dodo*.

Back in the U.S.A., the suburban lawn and backyard were offered to a section of the working class and to the middle classes. The alienation from nature they experienced in their new automobiles and at work was compensated for and then hidden by an equally alienated but much more pleasant relationship to nature at home. Forced to buy what they could easily make at home if there were

Dear comrades,

The following text is the translation of what Nikos Maziotis said to the court during his trial which took place on the 5th to 7th of July 1999 in Athens, Greece. He was convicted and given a 15-year prison sentence for 'attempted explosion with danger for human lives' and 'possession of guns and explosives' for his action of placing a bomb in the Ministry of Industry and Development on December 12, 97, in solidarity with the revolt of the villages in Strymonikos against the installation of a gold metallurgy by multinational company TVX GOLD. During the trial he again supported his choices politically, as he did from the beginning when he had sent a letter from prison with which he took responsibility of the action against the Ministry. Though he never accepted the charges the state was accusing him of, as revolutionary acts cannot be described in terms of the penal code. In that sense, this trial was not a typical procedure of convicting someone who pleads 'guilty' but it turned into a political confrontation as much between Nikos and his prosecutors, as between his comrades, anarchists and revolutionaries and the state and its mechanisms. This confrontation was strongly supported by the presence of comrades from Sardinia (Costantino Cavalleri), Italy (Alfredo Bonanno) and France (Hellyette Bess) who testified in the court in solidarity with Nikos and by the letters sent in support by the imprisoned militants of Action Directe, France, by the ABC of Barcelona and by other anarchist groups from Spain. All these together, along with the presence inside and outside the court of anarchist comrades and of course the speech of Nikos Maziotis against his prosecutors, gave a sense of the international struggle for freedom and of solidarity with all the people in revolt, with all political prisoners captured in moments of the social and class war against the state and the capital.

Solidarity,

Comrades from the Anarchist Circle and the collective 'Anarchists in Solidarity'

Excerpts from Nikos Maziotis' Statement to the Athens Criminal Court

First, I do not intend to pretend to be the 'good guy' here when I was forced to come. I will not apologize for anything, because I do not consider myself a criminal. I am a revolutionary. I have nothing to repent. I am proud of what I have done. The only thing I regret is the technical error that was made so the bomb didn't explode, so that my fingerprint was found on it later and I ended up here. This is the only thing I repent.

You must keep in mind that although you are judges and sitting higher than me, many times the revolutionaries, and myself specifically, have judged you long before you judge me. We are in opposite camps, hostile camps.

The revolutionaries and revolutionary justice -because I don't believe that this court is justice, it's the word justice in quotation marks- many times judge their enemies more mercilessly, when they get the chance to impose justice. I will begin from many years ago. We don't have any crime of mine to judge here. On the contrary, we will talk about crimes, but not mine. We will talk about the crimes of the State, of its mechanisms, of justice and police crimes...

The biggest lie of all time is that the State is society. I think Nietzsche has also said that the State lies. We are opposed to the division of society into classes, we are against a separation between those who give orders and others who obey orders. This authoritarian structure penetrates the whole of society and it is this structure that we want to destroy. Either with peaceful or with violent means, even with guns. I have no problem with that.

I will contradict my brother who said before, that he didn't want the guns in

order to make war. They were for war. Maybe they were just kept there. But guns are for war, you don't just have them to keep them at home. I might have kept them as they were, but they are to make war and I make war... The bomb in the ministry was an act of war.

Our purpose, within the anti-State and anti-capitalist struggle, is to connect ourselves with different social struggles. Our purpose when interfering in these struggles is also to attempt to make things reach the edge, which means to culminate with the conflict of these social parts with the State and the police. To urge the people fighting to surpass the institutional frames, the trade-unions, the local administrations and all these manipulators who are enemies of human freedom. Many comrades of mine, with their small forces, were engaged in such struggles. I will tell you about them more specifically. In 1989, in a struggle of environmental interest in the village of Aravissos, the residents of the area didn't want their water sources to be exploited by the Water Company of

Thessaloniki. They clashed with the police and the riot police, they burnt water pumps, they set fires and put up barricades. And some of our comrades from Thessaloniki took part in this struggle and they were even arrested....

Generally, wherever there are disturbances, there are conflicts we want to be in. To subvert things. For us, this is not a crime. In a real sense, these disturbances are the 'popular sovereignty' that professional politicians keep talking about. That's where freedom is expressed...

Now let's talk about the struggle of the people in Strymonikos. Long before I placed the bomb, other comrades had been to the villages, they had been talking with the people there, they had published a brochure about this revolt, about the clashes in October of 1996. But I will talk more specifically about the struggle in Strymonikos in a little while. First, I want to talk exclusively about the action.

To tell the truth, I was inspired to place this bomb for a specific reason: The people of the villages had surpassed the limits, by themselves. If it was a struggle inside institutional frames, in the way that trade unions and local administrations try to keep these struggles restricted, if it was confined in a mild, harmless and not dangerous protest, maybe I wouldn't have done anything.

But the comrades up there in the villages - who are not anarchists of course, but I don't care about that, they are citizens who also want their freedom - had surpassed every limit. They had conflicts with the police three times - in the 17th of October 1996, in the 25th of July '97 and in November '98, they had set fire to police cars and riot police vans, they had burnt machinery belonging to TVX, they had invaded in the mines of Olympiada and destroyed part of the installations. Some of them also became a sort of guerrilla. In the nights, they were going out with guns, shooting in the air to frighten the policemen. And I thought, these people are cool, they've gone even further than us. And then repression followed, especially in '97 when marshal law was imposed in the area.

The Chief of Police in Halkidiki gave an order according to which all gatherings and demonstrations were forbidden. They also sent special police units and police tanks, which came in the streets for the first time since 1980. And now they were sending them out again there, in the villages of Halkidiki. So, I thought, we must do something here, in Athens. It is not possible that the others are under repression and we here staying passive.

The ministry of Industry and Development, in Papadiamadopoulou and Michalakopoulou streets, was one of the centers of this case. The struggle in Strymonikos was a struggle against 'development', against 'modernization' and all this crap they keep saying. What is hidden behind all these expressions is the profits of multinationals, the profits of 'our own' capitalists, Greek capitalists, the profits of states' officials, of the Greek state, of the bureaucrats, of all those who take the money, of technical companies... There is no relation between this 'development' and 'modernization' they are talking about and the covering of popular needs. No relation at all. So, I placed a bomb.

The purpose was the one I said in the letter with which I took responsibility for the action. In the passage of February '98 I say: in placing the explosive device my purpose was to send a double political message. Everything is political. Even if you use such means, the messages are political. War itself is a means of political pressure. In this case, this was also a political means, a political practice.

First of all, it was a message to the people of Strymonikos that 'you are not alone, there are also others who may live 600 km away from you but they care'. Not for personal reasons... I don't know anyone from there personally. Other comrades know people from there. I haven't even been there. It was not my house that was threatened, but this is not the point.

Simply, my principle, and generally the principle of the anarchists and of other non-anarchist revolutionaries is that social freedom is one and inseparable. So, if freedom is partially offended, in essence it is offended as a whole. If their freedom is offended, mine is

offended too. Their war will be my war, especially in an area where the 'sovereign people' - again an expression used by professional politicians - does not want what the state and the capital want: the gold metallurgy of TVX.

On the other hand, I have said that, OK, there would be some damage - I knew that. Yes, I had the intention to cause material damage. So, what damage would that be? On the windows, in that specific place, what kind of damage? Or outside the storehouse where I placed the bomb? According to me, the damages would be minimal. But even if they were more than minimal, for me it is not important at all. Because freedom can't be compared with the material damages of some windows, of a state car or state-property. For me, the ministry is not an institution of common benefit as the charges say. Of state benefit yes, but not of any social benefit. However, even if the device did not explode, I sent my message...

I will refer a little to the technical aspects. Exactly because I am a social revolutionary, and when you say that it is like talking for the benefit of society. Not like. It is for the social benefit. As I have this principle I couldn't harm any citizen. I could harm a policeman. I consider them my enemies. And you are my enemies too. I separate you. I make a clear class separation. On one hand we have those, on the other hand, we have the others. In this occasion though I didn't intend to harm either the policeman who guarded the ministry or anybody else; and of course not a citizen.

The procedure that is used by groups or individuals, in general, is exactly this: you first place the bomb in your target and then you call to a newspaper. In that case, I called to 'Eleftherotipia' and said: In half an hour a bomb will explode there. Exactly what is written in the evidence: In 30 minutes there will be an explosion in the Ministry of Industry and Development, for the case of TVX in Strymonikos. Whether the bomb exploded or not there was absolutely no danger for human lives. In case that it exploded, there would be only material damages. So, it would happen exactly as I intended. Objectively, if the device had exploded there was no chance of an accident, like

In the Distance: Suburbia against the barricades.

Hausmann and City Planning: the birth of the human tide.

"Having, as they do the appearance of walling in a massive eternity, Hausmann's urban works are a wholly appropriate representation of the absolute governing principles of the Empire: repression of every individual formation, every organic self-development, 'fundamental' hatred of all individuality." - JJ Honeger 1874 (Benjamin, 122)

"But by the any standpoint other than that of facilitating police control, Hausmann's Paris is a city built by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Guy De Bord

Hausmann did not invent city planning, the Romans and ancient Chinese planned cities. Modern cities were planned and built in the British and French colonies earlier than in Europe. Washington DC was planned and built on an empty field decades before Hausmann refashioned Paris. What was different about Hausmann's Paris is that he built his new national capitol on top of the old Paris, a pre-industrial city. Hausmann's Paris reveals more about the architecture of capitalism and of the nation state than L'Enfant's D.C because it shows us what Hausmann chose to destroy as well as what he chose to build. In his demolition of poor neighborhoods and narrow streets we can see what he considered a threat to the new state and economy.

Boulevards were already replacing narrow streets in Paris two decades earlier than Hausmann took office, but on a much smaller scale. During the July revolution of 1830 an ironic twist befell government soldiers. The large squares of granite that were being used to pave new boulevards were dragged up to the top floor of houses and dropped on the heads of soldiers. These stones became a common source of barricade building materials. In 1830 there were 6,000 barricades. Hausmann took office after both the 1830 and 1848 insurrections, in 1853. In an attempt to prevent

other insurrections, Hausmann tried to eliminate the construction of barricades by destroying narrow streets and replacing them with wide boulevards. He also built boulevards in order to allow for the easy transport of troops "connecting the government with the troops and the troops with the suburbs" and allowing troops to surround neighborhoods in the city. (Benjamin, 137-8) By paving boulevards Hausmann facilitated the regulated and regular movement of troops.

Hausmann's Paris was more than just a city. It was a symbol; its monuments and boulevards created an image of the capitol of a powerful empire. The fancy new boulevards that were part of this image pushed rents up just like recent "urban revitalization" projects. In 1864 Hausmann gave a speech venting "his hatred of the rootless urban population." (Benjamin, 12). The construction of boulevards drove the proletariat into the suburbs and increased the population of wandering homeless. Working class neighborhoods were destroyed to literally pave the way for boulevards, and when this didn't drive workers out of the city rising rents did. Hausmann's destruction and construction placed neighborhoods that were likely to revolt outside of the city. Boulevards allowed traffic to flow to the center of the city. The movement of workers' homes to the suburbs meant that 'commuting' to and from work was born on a mass scale.

"Hundreds of thousands of families, who work in the center of the capital, sleep in the outskirts. The movement resembles the tide: in the morning the workers stream into Paris, and in the evening the same wave of people flows out. It is a melancholy image...I would add...that it is the first time that humanity has assisted in a spectacle so dispiriting for the people." A. Graneau, *L'ouvrier devant la société - Paris, 1868* (Benjamin, 137)

Hausmann aimed to detain and fix the rootless and to channel workers into linear movement: from home to work, from work to home, a precursor to metro, boulevard, dodo.¹

Hausmann planned the construction of railway links between the center of Paris and its outskirts during a period in which the European railways expanded considerably. "Space is killed by the railways and we are left with time alone." - Heinrich Heine (Rice, 207) Space may not have been killed by the railways but high-speed travel has made travel time a greater consideration than travel distance. What Georg Simmel said of money can be said of the modern city. They both allow connections between previously distant things but make that which is close more difficult to reach. While distances were conquered by the railways, the nearby slipped further away. That is, at the same time as transportation and communications allowed one to reach far away places in a short period of time, ones neighbors became more distant: industrialization demanded

¹ This is a French expression for "from the metro, to work, to sleep" it is used to refer to the daily grind of work and commuting.

in the late 1700s, those passports were easy to forge. However, it is fitting that the Apaches resisted this technology not by forging it but by ignoring it and traveling beyond the areas controlled by Spanish. Unfortunately there are now fewer deserts to roam where such things can be ignored, but such places do still exist. The combined use of these technologies and increased surveillance (such as the millions of dollars budgeted for wiretapping in the 2000 Federal Budget) are of great benefit to the budding prison industrial complex.

These technologies give those in power more effective means to keep people in their designated place in the world of sanity: the measured, disciplined, educated, treated, productive world that functions according to the logics of capital and the state. There are always those who escape, defy or resist these logics, this is precisely why the state goes to such lengths to contain us. They are used in tracking systems that give governments and companies the means to find people and put them where they are 'useful' to the powerful, such as within the prison industrial complex, or to exclude people from access to privileged domains (gated

communities, company buildings, rich countries etc.). While restrictions on human movement are increasing, restrictions on the movement of capital are diminishing. However, the free movement of individuals has always been a threat to productivity; these new technologies are merely a more efficient means to achieve the same repressive goal. They are used to prevent us from acting on our desires unless our desires have become perverted and trapped within the cycle of production and consumption. *Reducciones*, missions, "Peace Establishments" and confinement were and are all forms of rationalization: they fix and contain human bodies

The free movement of individuals has always been a threat to productivity, the willfully idle vagabond uses mobility to escape the grind of work and the wandering worker can use mobility as an advantage over his boss. The free movement through space is a threat to the state because it threatens any control over space. Complete free movement through space would not only threaten the nation-state but all private property. Mobility is our power.



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exploding before or after the time given...

I want to refer more to what I call solidarity, to the motives that I had. What is this solidarity. I believe ...that human society was created, based on three components: solidarity, mutuality and helping each other. So, that's what human freedom is based on. Any social group in struggle, in a different place and time, whether they are pupils or farmers or citizens of local societies, for me and for the anarchists these struggles are very important. It doesn't have to do with whether I am a worker and identifying my interests with the interests of that class. If someone asks for a higher salary or has a trade-unionist demand for me it is not important. For me, solidarity means the unreserved acceptance and support with every means of the right that the people must have to determine their lives as they wish, not letting others decide in their place, like the State and the Capital do.

That means that in this specific case, of the struggle of Strymonikos but also in every social struggle, for me what counts mostly is that they are struggles through which the people want to determine their fate alone. And not having any police chief or state official or capitalist deciding what they should do. It is of secondary importance if they want or don't want the factory, if the focal point of the struggle is environmental. The important thing is that they don't want the factory because they don't like something imposed to them with violence.

Concerning the matter of political violence now... From the very beginning they tried to present a case of 'repulsive criminals' and 'terrorists' who 'placed blind bombs': something that doesn't exist. If theoretically terrorism is exercising violence against citizens and an unarmed population, that definition applies exclusively for the State. Only the State attacks civilians, that's what the repression mechanisms are for: the riot police, special repression police units, the army, special forces... Mechanisms that also rob the people. They finance armed professionals, policemen. Aren't they trained to shoot real targets? Aren't they riot police armed with chemical gas? To

use them where? On citizens, in the demonstrations. So, only the State exercises violence against the citizens. I didn't use any violence against any citizen. I will say exactly what terrorism is.

Terrorism is when occupations, demonstrations and strikes are being attacked. When the riot police attacked the pensioners who demonstrated outside Maximou four years ago...

Terrorism is when special police forces invade the Chemistry School and beat up anarchists and youth...

Terrorism is when citizens are murdered by the police in simple 'identification controls'...

Terrorism is when Ali Yumfraz, a Pomak from Vrilisia suburb of Athens, was arrested for being drunk and later was found dead in his cell in the police station...

Terrorism is this court, here. Every trial of a militant, every trial of a revolutionary is terrorism, a message of intimidation for society. I said it again in my statements yesterday, when you called me to say if I accept the charges, and I will repeat it. Because of my persecution being political, the message is clear: whoever fights against the State and the Capital will be penalized, criminalized and given the characterization of terrorist. The same for any solidarity to any social struggle: it will be penalized and crushed down. This is the message of this trial and by this sense it is terrorism. Terrorism against me, terrorism against the anarchists, terrorism against the people of Strymonikos, who are also receiving similar messages this period, as they have similar trials for their mobilizations. This is terrorism. The fact that I put a bomb as an action of solidarity is not terrorism. Because no citizen was harmed by this action.

What the state wants is to deal with everyone alone. You must have heard an expression that the prime minister Simitis is using a lot, talking about 'social automatism' whenever social reactions burst out. He uses this expression in order to present these social reactions -the blockades in the streets, the squatting of public buildings

and all the actions of this kind- as being in contrast with the interests of the rest of society. Something that is a total lie. It is just the tactics of 'divide and rule', which means 'spread the discord to break solidarity'. Because solidarity is very important as anyone who is alone becomes an easy target. When a workers' strike takes place and there is no solidarity it is easier for it to be attacked. They talk about a 'minority'. This is the argument of the state, that it is 'a trade-unionist minority having retrogressive interests which turn against modernization, against development, against all the reforms' and all that nonsense. Well, there hasn't been one social part or social group that didn't come up in conflict with the state, especially during the 90's, and that hasn't been faced with the argument that 'you are just a minority', that 'your struggle is in contrast with the rest of society's interests'. That is exactly what happened in all cases.... The same thing happened of course with the people of Strymonikos.

What is really being attacked is solidarity. And that's what is also attacked, without any disguise, through my trial. The state wants to attack everyone alone. Because when it finds them together things are much more difficult.

Finally, I am not on trial because I placed a bomb, not because I possessed three guns and ten kilograms of dynamite. After all, the army and the police have a lot more guns than me and they use them. The one can't be compared with the other.

I have nothing else to say. The only thing I'll say more is that no matter what sentence I am convicted with, because it is certain that I will be convicted, I am not going to repent for anything. I will remain who I am. I can also say that prison is always a school for a revolutionary. His ideas and the endurance of his soul are experienced. And if he surpasses this test he becomes stronger and believes more in those things for which he was brought to prison. I have nothing more to say.

I want to complete what I was telling the public prosecutor before, about terrorism on an international level. In reality, at this moment, the US is the

global genocide and terrorism, as the only great world power left. Which means it is the worst thing on earth. And according to our perception-as anarchist- the State, all the states and all the governments are antisocial, terrorist mechanisms, since they have organized armies, police, hired torturers. I also want to complete what I was saying about having two weights and two measures. For example, the US provides with weapons, finances and instigates every dictatorial regime all over the world. And in Greece as well. In Latin America, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Peru.... This is Terrorism. Terrorism is to arm dictators, to arm death squads in Argentina or in Bolivia in order to kill people of the Left, citizens, revolutionaries. Those who equip the death squads to torture, those are the terrorists. Terrorism is when they bombard Yugoslavia for ten days, killing civilians.

Excuse me, Mr. prosecutor, but the US are the ones who say who is a terrorist and who isn't. Their State Department issues official directions, advising Greece about who is a terrorist. At this time, they place pressure on the Greek state to make an anti-terrorist law, a model of law which will criminalize those who fight, to make laws which are more draconian than those already existing.... These are Terrorism.

The revolutionaries and the militants are not terrorists. Terrorists are the states themselves. And with this accusation, with this signifying (of terrorism) all the states and governments try to criminalize the social revolutionaries and the militants inside their countries. The internal social enemy.... In fact, the State, justice and the police face me also as this kind of enemy. As an internal social enemy. On the basis of the division I described before. That's the way the state sees it. This is what is ventured in this trial. Public prosecutor: What do you have to oppose to the existent?

Social revolution. By any means necessary. It is generally proven, because I am well versed in Greek as well as in international social and political history, that no changes have ever come about, never did humanity achieve any progress -progress as I conceive it- through begging, praying or with words alone.

In the text I sent to claim the action, when I said that I placed the bomb, which was published in *Eleftherotypi* newspaper, I said that the social elite, the mandarins of the capital, the bureaucrats, all these useless and parasitic people -that should disappear from the proscenium of history- they

will never give up their privileges through a civilized discussion, through persuasion. I don't want to have a discussion because you can't have a discussion with that kind of people....

I would like to add something. Exactly because I have studied a lot, I know that during the events of July of '65, a conservative congressman of the National Radical Union came out and said about those who went down to the streets and caused disturbances, when Peroulas was killed, that "democracy is not the red tramps but we, the participants in the parliament", which means the congressmen who are well paid.

I will reverse that. Popular sovereignty, sir judges, is when molotov cocktails and stones are thrown at the police, when state cars, banks, shopping centers and luxury stores are burnt down.... This is how the people react. History itself has proven that this is the way people react. This is popular sovereignty. When Mustafa's goes and places a bomb in the ministry of Industry and Development, in solidarity with the struggle of the people in Smyrnaios. This is the real popular sovereignty and not what the Constitution says....

July 7, 1999



when the Mexicans ran out of rations in 1833, the Apaches returned to that of 1770 with as many Apaches roasting and raiding as before the "Peace Establishments" were built. (Worcester) In short, these measures failed, the nomadic Apache continued to elude the Spanish. These Apaches fiercely resisted domestication and refused to settle down permanently. Only later, Mexico and the US finally forced to settle or exterminated them but this achieved only after a long struggle.

Reducciones, Missions and "Peace Establishments" all put residents where they were locatable so that they would be more easily exploitable. The vagabonds of Europe were as much a threat to the powerful as the nomads and semi-nomads of Latin America, they were therefore also submitted to regimes of domestication. While the residents of Missions were converted to Christianity while they were taught the discipline of daily labor, European vagabonds were forced out of idleness while enclosed within four walls.

Confinement and European Domestication

During the early 1600s the first "houses of confinement" were built in Europe, to still the wandering and to put the idle to work.

In 1607 an ordinance called the archers to the gates of Paris to shoot at any vagabonds or beggars who dared try to enter the city. In 1656 the Hospital General was created, this was more a prison than a hospital and it was used to confine the idle, the vagabonds, beggars, sick and insane. Its openly claimed aim was to prevent idleness. The edict of 1657 was a vagrancy law that was enforced by archers who herded people into the Hospital. This is an interesting mutation of the 1607 policy and an example of an increasing reliance on confinement. These changes in punishment corresponded with an increasing social instability due to a growth in unemployment and a decrease in wages. This instability created an increased mobility of classes. In response to these changes there were three large uprisings in Paris in the early 1600s and guilds were formed in many trades. Obviously this new emphasis on confinement did not disappear with the end of this particular economic crisis. Confinement continued to be used as a source of cheap manpower after the crisis. In subsequent periods of unemployment it was again used as a weapon against social agitation and uprisings.

It is noteworthy that the first houses of confinement in England, France and Germany were built in the most industrialized cities of those countries. In England houses of confinement were opened in 1610 to occupy the pensioners of certain mills and weaving and carding shops. This was done during a recession, in other words, in a time where there was a high risk of rebellion. Industrialization had a great impact on class structure, it created new classes and thus allowed for individuals to change class. It also created new particularly appalling working conditions. As I have mentioned these drastic changes were, not surprisingly, met with resistance and revolt. Confinement was either a response to revolt or a means to prevent violent resistance to industrialization and its results. The history of confinement and other institutions or technologies of control is not a one-way linear process of increasing repression but a series of jumps, a conflict ridden complex of resistances and the states' responses to resistance.

Measuring Life: Bionetrics

Identification is a key technology of control used to keep immigrants out and supposed "criminals" locked in. Computerized bionetrics are now the most effective technologies of identification. Fingerprinting is an older form of bionmetrics. The Human Genome Project is trying to map out the genes of every citizen of Iceland and put this information into a database. This leads us towards a world in which, according to the system, the most valuable thing about the human body is the digital data which it provides.

Bionmetrics are being used to restrict access to anything from a building to the nation-state. It is useful to know what specific technologies they are using against us. For example, iris scanning is a very accurate technology of identification but luckily it has its limitations. It is less effective when used on people with very dark brown eyes. This is a very fortunate coincidence in countries like the US and Britain with racist copel Rethina scanning, on the other hand is said to be infallible. "Counterfeit resistant" Laser ID cards are used by the US INS for Green Cards and for the Department of State's Border Crossing Card. The EU is considering using this technology as well. Their spread to Europe would be tragic news for illegal immigrants. Data (biological and other wise) which is written onto the Laser Card's optical memory cannot be altered, therefore it is nearly impossible to forge this technology. This technology is obviously a vast improvement over the passports given to Apaches

Fixed abodes

Domestication and sedentization are not processes that were only imposed on "primitive" peoples; these processes occurred in Europe as well. Latin American nomads and European vagabonds experienced similar repression but by different means. Missions and prisons served similar functions: they settled the roamers and put them to work. Now, there are many all too familiar ways to regulate or fix movement. Here in the US, incarceration rates are skyrocketing. The computerization of biometrics is a new weapon in the State's arsenal that greatly increases the accuracy with which they can identify human beings: this facilitates incarceration and immigration control. The above technologies and institutions of control share a common aim: to regulate movement and direct human action into the repetitive rotation of production and consumption.

Domestication in Latin America

Throughout Latin America during the colonial period Spanish style towns and cities were built with a central plaza, church and municipal building. American settlement patterns had been generally much more dispersed than Spanish towns. The colonial administration forcibly concentrated dispersed settlements into such towns (reducciones). Once in towns it was much easier for individuals to be reduced to subjects of the crown and coerced into giving tribute.

The Missions settled, converted and hispanized previously nomadic or semi-nomadic groups. They also eliminated hunting and gathering in order to enforce the production of a substantial agricultural surplus. (Hu de Hart 1981: 36) This system destroyed the economic autonomy that was based in hunting and gathering and attempted to instill the discipline of daily work, so that residents would produce with less resistance. One crucial aspect of this was the imposition of the time of the mission bell and the Christian work week. Obviously profit cannot be maximized if workers are left to work on their own time. The logic of productivity needs to organize time as well as space.

Apache warfare and raiding were very successful and managed to repel Spaniards from a 250 mile

area, near the present day Mexico-US border. The Colonial administration had still not gained control of this area in 1821, at the time of independence. The Spaniards simply could not dominate the Apache militarily. Apaches were familiar with the area and traveled on horseback, they often raided Spanish settlements and disappeared without a trace. Colonial policies with regards to nomadic and semi-nomadic people always made sedentization a priority for this very reason. How could they control or exploit people that they can't even find?

After all else had failed, the Spanish administration lured some Apaches into "Peace Establishments" (settlements near presidios) in 1786 by simply promising them weekly rations. One interesting difference between these settlements and Missions is that these settlements were a financial loss to the crown, they did not manage to exploit residents except when males were forced to serve militarily.



That is, in this case control was more important to them than exploitation. They resorted to this method because Apaches simply would not submit to settling in missions. Residents of these settlements were forbidden from traveling beyond 30 miles from settlements unless authorized and were required to carry passports in those cases. (Griffin 1988: 99) But this law was often ignored and Apaches continued to travel where they wished. Apaches were encouraged to use guns instead of bows and arrows so that they would be dependent on the market for the acquisition of gunpowder, and they were encouraged to use liquor for the same reason. These measures were moderately successful for 25 years. But when rations started to dwindle raiding increased and

N30 Black Bloc Communiqué

by ACME Collective Dec. 4 '99

A communiqué from one section of the black bloc of N30 in Seattle

On November 30, several groups of individuals in black bloc attacked various corporate targets in downtown Seattle. Among them were (to name just a few): Fidelity Investment (major investor in Occidental Petroleum, the base of the Uva tribe in Columbia), Bank of America, US Bancorp, Key Bank and Washington Mutual Bank (financial institutions key in the expansion of corporate repression). Old Navy, Binana Republic and the GAP (as Father family brands, repers of Northwest forest lands and sweatshop laborers) NikeTown and Levi's (whose overpriced products are made in sweatshops) McDonald's (slave-wage fast-food peddlers responsible for destruction of tropical rainforests for grazing land and slaughter of animals) Starbucks (peddlers of an addictive substance whose products are harvested at below-poverty wages by farmers who are forced to destroy their own forests in the process) Warner Bros. (media monopolies) Planet Hollywood (for being Planet Hollywood).

This activity lasted for over 5 hours and involved the breaking of storefront windows and doors and defacing of facades. Slingshots, newspaper boxes, sledge hammers, mallets, crowbars and nail-pullers were used to strategically destroy corporate property and gain access (one of the three targeted Starbucks and NikeTown were looted). Eggs filled with glass etching solution, paint-balls and spray-paint were also used.

The black bloc was a loosely organized cluster of affinity groups and individuals who roamed downtown, pulled this way by a vulnerable and significant storefront and that way by the sight of a police formation. Unlike the vast majority of activists who were pepper-sprayed, tear-gassed and shot at with rubber bullets on several occasions, most of our section of the black bloc escaped serious injury by remaining constantly in motion and avoiding engagement with the police. We buddied up, kept tight and watched each others' backs.

Those attacked by federal thugs were un-arrested by quick-thinking and organized members of the black bloc. The sense of solidarity was awe-inspiring.

THE PEACE POLICE

Unfortunately, the presence and persistence of "peace police" was quite disturbing. On at least 6 separate occasions, so-called "non-violent" activists physically attacked individuals who targeted corporate property. Some even went so far as to stand in front of the NikeTown super store and tackle and shove the black bloc away. Indeed, such self-described "peace-keepers" posed a much greater threat to individuals in the black bloc than the notoriously violent uniformed "peace-keepers" sanctioned by the state undercover officers have even used the cover of the activist peace-keepers to ambush those who engage in corporate property destruction.

RESPONSE TO THE BLACK BLOC

Response to the black bloc has highlighted some of the contradictions and internal oppressions of the "nonviolent activist" community. Aside from the obvious hypocrisy of those who engaged in violence against black-dad and harassed people (many of whom were engaged in property destruction), there is the racism of privileged activists who can afford to ignore the violence perpetrated against the bulk of society and the natural world in the name of private property rights. Window-smashing has engaged and inspired many of the most oppressed members of Seattle's community more than any giant puppets or sea turtle costumes ever could (not to disparage the effectiveness of those tools in other communities).

TEN MYTHS ABOUT THE BLACK BLOC

Here's a little something to dispel the myths that have been circulating about the N30 black bloc:

1. "They are all a bunch of Eugene anarchists." While a few may be anarchists from Eugene, we hail from all over the United States, including Seattle. In any case, most of us are familiar with local issues in Seattle (for instance, the recent occupation of downtown by some of the most nefarious of multinational retailers).

2. "They are all followers of John Zerzan." A lot of rumors have been circulating that a lot of followers of John Zerzan, an anarcho-primitivist author from Eugene who advocates property destruction. While some of us may appreciate his writings and analyses, he is in no sense our leader, directly, indirectly, philosophically or otherwise.

3. "The mass public squat is the headquarters of the anarchists who destroyed property on November 30th." In reality, most of the people in the "Autonomous Zone" squat are residents of Seattle who have spent most of their time since its opening on the 28th in the squat. While they may know of one-another, the two groups are not co-extensive and in no case could the squat be considered the headquarters of people who destroyed property.

4. "They escalated situations on the 30th, leading to the tear-gassing of passive, non-violent protesters." To answer this, we need only note that tear-gassing, pepper-spraying and the shooting of rubber bullets all began before the black blocs (as far as we know) started engaging in property destruction. In addition, we must resist the tendency to establish a causal relationship between police repression and protest in any form, whether it involved property destruction or not. The police are charged with protecting the interests of the wealthy and the blame for the violence cannot be placed upon those who protest those interests.

5. Conversely: "They acted in response to the police repression." While this might be a more positive representation of the black bloc, it is nevertheless false. We refuse to be misconstrued as a purely reactionary force. While the logic of the black bloc may not make sense to some, it is in any case a proactive logic.

6. "They are a bunch of angry adolescent boys." Aside from the fact that it belies a disturbing agerism and sexism, it is false. Property destruction is not merely macho rabble-rousing or testosterone-laden angst release. Nor is it displaced and reactionary anger. It is strategically and specifically targeted direct action against corporate interests.

Kellina Xena Becas

7. "They just want to right." This is pretty absurd, and it conveniently ignores the eagerness of police to right us. Of all the groups engaging in direct action, the black bloc was perhaps the least interested in engaging the authorities and we certainly had no interest in fighting with other anti-WTO activists (despite some rather strong disagreements over tactics).

8. "They are a chaotic, disorganized and opportunistic mob." While many of us could surely spend days arguing over what "chaotic" means, we were certainly not disorganized. The organization may have been fluid and dynamic, but it was right. As for the charge of opportunism, it would be hard to imagine who of the thousands in attendance didn't take advantage of the opportunity created in Seattle to advance their agenda. The question becomes, then, whether or not we helped create that opportunity and most of us certainly did (which leads us to the next myth):

9. "They don't know the issues" or "They aren't activists who've been working on this." While we may not be professional activists, we've all been working on this convergence in Seattle for months. Some of us did work in our hometowns and others came to Seattle months in advance to work on it. To be sure, we were responsible for many hundreds of people who came out on the streets on the 30th, only a very small minority of which had anything to do with the black bloc. Most of us have been studying the effects of the global economy, genetic engineering, resource extraction, transportation labor practices, elimination of indigenous autonomy, animal rights and human rights and have been doing activism on these issues for many years. We are neither ill-informed nor inexperienced.

10. "Masked anarchists are anti-democratic and secretive because they hide their identities. Let's face it (with or without a mask)—we aren't living in a democracy right now. If this week has not made it plain enough, let us remind you—we are living in a police state. People tell us that if we really think that we're right, we wouldn't be hiding behind masks. The truth will prevail." Is the assertion. While this is a fine and noble goal, it does not live with the present reality. Those who pose the greatest threat to the interests of Capital and State will be persecuted. Some pacifists would have us accept this persecution gleefully. Others would tell us that it is a worthy sacrifice. We are not no more. Nor do we feel we have the privilege to accept persecution as

a sacrifice: persecution to us is a daily inevitability and we treasure our few freedoms. To accept incarceration as a form of flattery betrays a large amount of "first world" privilege. We feel that an attack on private property is necessary if we are to rebuild a world which is useful, beautiful and joyful for everyone. And this despite the fact that hyperinflated private property rights in this country translate into felony charges for any property destruction over \$250.

MOTIVATIONS OF THE BLACK BLOC

The primary purpose of this communiqué is to diffuse some of the aura of mystery that surrounds the black bloc and make some of its motivations more transparent, since our masks cannot be.

ON THE VIOLENCE OF PROPERTY

We contend that property destruction is not a violent activity unless it destroys lives or causes pain in the process. By this definition, private property—especially corporate private property—is itself infinitely more violent than any action taken against it.

Private property should be distinguished from personal property. The latter is based upon use while the former is based upon trade. The premise of personal property is that each of us has what s/he needs. The premise of private property is that each of us has something that someone else needs or wants. In a society based on private property rights, others need or want have greater power. By extension, they wield greater control over what others perceive as needs and desires, usually in the interest of increasing profit to themselves.

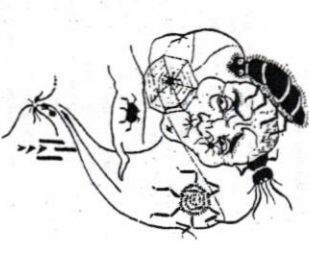
Advocates of "free trade" would like to see this process to its logical conclusion: a network of a few industry monopolies with ultimate control over the lives of the everyone else. Advocates of "fair trade" would like to see this process mitigated by government regulations meant to superficially impose basic humanitarian standards. As anarchists, we despise both positions. Private property and capitalism, by extension is intrinsically violent and repressive and cannot be reformed or mitigated. Whether the power of everyone is concentrated into the hands of a few corporate heads or diverted into a regulatory apparatus charged with mitigating the disasters of the latter, no one can be as free or as powerful as they could be in a non-hierarchical society. When we smash a window, we aim to destroy the thin veneer

of legitimacy that surrounds private property rights. At the same time, we exercise that set of violent and destructive social relationships which has been imbued in almost everything around us. By "destroying" private property, we convert its limited exchange value into an expanded use value. A storefront window becomes a vent to let some fresh air into the oppressive atmosphere of a retail outlet (at least until the police decide to tear-gas a nearby road blockade). A newspaper box becomes a tool for creating such vents or a small blockade for the reclamation of public space or an object to improve one's vantage point by standing on it. A dumpster becomes an obstruction to a phalanx of rioting cops and a source of heat and light. A building facade becomes a message board to record brainstorm ideas for a better world.

After 9/11, many people will never see a shop window or a hammer the same way again. The potential uses of an entire cityscape have increased a thousand-fold. The number of broken windows pales in comparison to the number broken spell-casts cast by a corporate hegemony to bail us into forgetfulness of all the violence committed in the name of private property rights and of all the potential of a society without them. Broken windows can be boarded up (with yet more waste of our forests) and eventually replaced, but the shattering of assumptions will hopefully persist for some time to come.

Against Capital and State,
the A.C.M.E. Collective

Disclaimer: these observations and analyses represent only those of the A.C.M.E. Collective and should not be construed to be representative of the rest of the black bloc, or NSO or anyone else who engaged in riot or property destruction that day.



He tore himself away quickly. He took care of some business, and to distract himself, thought of seeing his mistress. On his way, he bought a bouquet of flowers to offer her.

She smiled, seeing amidst the flowers what appeared to be a love letter: "Some verses, now, says she?"

Prostitution is the outlet of too many bourgeois. One turns the son of the poor man into a slave and his daughter into a courtesan.

Long Live Anarchy!

She threw the bouquet in his face and sent him away.

Ashamed and tired, he returned home, the door had once again taken on its usual appearance.

Now, upon entering the living room, his wife said to him: "Look at this vase that I just bought, what an occasion." He took it, turned it around, and turned it around again: a piece of paper fell out:

The luxury of the bourgeois is paid for by the blood of the poor man.

Long Live Anarchy!

This "Long Live Anarchy!" and its harsh claims, all this hovered around him, and that very evening, he didn't see go to see his wife, in fear of finding, in a discreet and camouflaged place, a flyer where he would have read:

Marriage is legal prostitution.

Long Live Anarchy!

Le Libertaire
26/08/1898



THE PARTICULAR AND THE UNIVERSAL

A cronopio was about to brush his teeth standing next to his balcony, and being possessed by a very incredible glee to see the morning sun and the handsome clouds racing through the sky, he squeezed the tube of toothpaste prodigiously and the toothpaste began to emerge in a long pink strip. After having covered his brush with a veritable mountain of toothpaste, the cronopio found he had some left over, started to flap the tube out the window still squeezing away and strips of pink toothpaste fell over the balcony into the street where several fumas had gathered to discuss municipal scandals. The strips of pink toothpaste landed all over the fuma's hats, while up above, the cronopio was tugging away and filled with great contentment was brushing his teeth. The fumas grew very indignant over the incredible lack of self-consciousness on the cronopio's part, and decided to appoint a delegation to upbraid him immediately. With which the delegation, composed of three fumas, romped up the stairs to the cronopio's apartment and reproached him, addressing him like this:

--Cronopio, you've ruined our hats, you'll have to pay for them.

And afterward with a great deal more force:

--Cronopio, you shouldn't have wasted your toothpaste like that!

--Julio Cortazar

By Albert Libertad

Durand, leaving his hotel, a smile of contentment on his lips, took a small step back, to read a tiny poster:

*While we perish in the street,
the bourgeois has palaces to live in
Death to the bourgeois!
Long Live Anarchy!*

Then, he sneered, and yelled to the concierge "You will take these idiocies off of the door"

And his calm smile came back when he noticed, glorious in their incapacity, two officers on the beat. But he stopped at the same time as them, red flyers stuck out on the stark white of the wall:

*Cops are the bulldogs of the bourgeois
Death to cops!
Long Live Anarchy!*

The cops used their nails to scratch off the posters and Durant left anxious. While at the corner of the avenue, he heard the sound of bugles and drums and from afar two battalions appeared. He felt protected and breathed a sigh of relief.

As a troupe passed in front of him, he discovered, at that moment, like a flight of butterflies, a multitude of squares of paper floating in the air; indifferently, he read:

*The army is the school of crime
Long Live Anarchy!*

Some of the papers fell on the soldiers, others covered them; his obsession resumed, he felt crushed by the light butterflies.

When he sat down in his usual place to have a beer or the usual aperitif, on the table laid another flyer:

*Go on, gorge yourself, the day will come when hate will turn us into cannibals.
Long Live Anarchy!*

He sneered, but this time he didn't fill up saucer after saucer.

Getting up, he headed quickly toward the corner of X street, where the exploiters asked for workers and mechanically researched for the propaganda poster, he discovered it and read:

*The exploiter Thing or Machine asks for your sons to degrade them,
Your daughters to rape them, you and your wives
to exploit you
Watch out Parisians.
Long Live Anarchy!*

He shook his head and headed towards his office. He read on a plaque: Durand and Cie, Society in a capitol of two million, but, below, the exasperating critique said its piece:

*Capital is the product of work
stolen and accumulated by the idle.
Long Live Anarchy!*

On Behalf of the Barbarians

Bleu Marin—translated from *Diavolo in Corpo*

If I don't know the meaning of a language, I will be a barbarian to he who speaks it, and he who speaks to me will be a barbarian.

Paul, First Corinthians

Civilization finishes when the barbarians flee.

IN THE HEART OF THE
CITY

The history of a civilization is simultaneously the history of the transformation of its language. A society develops around its knowledge, which is articulated through its language, which becomes concrete in thinking itself. Humans act on the basis of their desires, they desire on the basis of their thoughts, they think on the basis of their language. The form and content of the latter are hence at the same time the condition and result of the whole of social relations. The dominant language of an epoch is therefore always the language of those who dominate socially in that period.

If there is a concept that clearly expresses the relation between language and society it is that of the barbarian. For the Greeks the barbarian was the foreigner and at

the same time he was also the "sutterer" since he who couldn't master the language of the *polis*, of the city, was defined with contempt. The origin of the word referred to being deprived of *logos*, i.e. of discourse. If one considers that Aristotle defined man alternately as a "political animal" and as an "animal endowed with *logos*", it follows from this that, by confirming the identity of language with politics, the barbarian is excluded not only from the city, but from human community itself. The barbarian is a non-man, a monster.

THE LOGOS OF WORK

The logos is not only discourse or language, but is also science, law, reason, order (in the sense of a regulative principle and of the plot that connects and expresses the multiplicity of the real. All of these meanings are present at the same time

in the word logos, which is verifiably untranslatable (the English term that comes closest to it is "expression"). Only by keeping all of these in mind can one grasp the meaning of the Aristotelian definition of man, as well as the nature of its opposite, the barbarian. The first trace of the word logos is found in the fragments of Heraclitus (4th to 5th century B.C.), which from time to time, and simultaneously, point to a cosmic principle, the order of reality with its multiple expressions, the human understanding of this order and Heraclitean discourse itself. Already in these fragments the element common to men is identified in the logos.

Until the times of Homeric poems common space is the assembly which the warriors put at their disposal, for the collective good, the loot of war, or discussions. This relation between the center and that which is common is transferred to the *agora*, that is in the city square, the place of political decisions. The categories of public discourse indicate precisely the act of

bringing down (*katō*) into the middle of the assembly (*agorā*) words submitted for general approval. The barbarian is thus he who is outside categories, he who, not having access to the center of the assembly, is excluded from public life. A stranger in his own house, the sinner in the language of the city, he will thus join the foreigner outside. The woman and the slave, those banished from discourse (that is order, reason and law) these inhabitants of the internal colony, represent two steps of the staircase that ends in the worst cruelty permitted and committed towards the barbarian, the inferior, the enemy.

The power of assembly belongs to he who knows the art of rhetoric, the techniques for ingratiating oneself for the favors of the powerful goddess Persuasion. The more one has time to gain the possession of discourse, the more one is able to exercise its force, in eliminating the private reason of others, one's own discourse is imposed as common. The power of the *logos* on the soul persuades as it is like that of the master on the slave; with the difference that the soul is reduced to slavery not by force but by the mysterious pressure exercised on his conscience. Thus wrote Plato in *Philebus*, illustrating well the dominating force of language. But that which is important is not only to recognize that, in politics, discourse is an arm of war, but also to ask oneself about the relation that links this arm to all others. Only he who has slaves that work for him can chain others with his discourse. The activity of individuals is already specialized because a hierarchical and superior role is attributed to the word. The division between manual and intellectual labor, in the meantime makes the activity of slaves accumulate in objects (and then in money and in machines) for the master, increasing the *logos* of the latter. This is the fate of verbalized logic; where the word has all meaning, the dominant meaning loses no time in taking hold of all the words.¹ G. Césaire. But the "mystical pressure" exercised on the assent of the slave would not be

possible if the language of his body were not reduced to the coercive rationality of work. It is in producing work that the economy has produced its own language. So, one better understands why controlling the language of the exploited has always been the project of the exploiters. To first give discursive logic all the power (at the expense of the barbaric reason of the body) is to subsequently give to the powerless an increasingly reduced logic. The I that speaks is a figure that represents the body of the individual (corporeality that is first of all a work force) as the state, the holder of public discourse, represents the whole of society. The more the interior dialogue of the individual - his consciousness - conforms to the dominant language, the greater his assent, his submission will be. In this sense, capital, the dead work of a life constrained to survival, is "discourse" "the organization of fictitious meanings, mechanical logic, the fictitious game of representation" (G. Césaire). It makes the language of that which extinguishes passions speak to the passions.

A FLIGHT BACKWARDS

But let's return to our barbarians who tell us the history of civilization, this land of *logos* and politics, better than anyone.

If the accepted meaning of the concept of barbarians bears witness to a meaning that is that of progressive ideology (the barbarian is the opposite of a reasonable, scientific, and democratic society; that is monstrously, menacing silence, irrational violence, superstition, gloomy withdrawal etc), there is a whole tradition of thought that has seen the barbarians as more vigorous beings than the civilized because they are closer to nature. From Polybius to Coran, passing through Tacitus and Giucardini, Machiavelli and Montesquieu, Rousseau and Leopardi one can once again go over the idea that they are illustrious, copiously distilled from nature to push men towards generous actions, while reason, the product of civilization

becomes calculating, turned on the same eternal doubters themselves. Leopardi said that a people of philosophers would be the most cowardly and wretched of all, precisely because it would be the most civilized. The fall of Rome and "Hellenist decadence" are brought up in particular by Montesquieu, as examples in this sense. From the Germans of Tacitus to the modern Unit of Coran, the conducting wire of this tradition is the connection between the affirmation of the body, the imaginative faculty, bold virtue and desire for action. Quite often within this conception of history, the time of civilization repeats in a cyclical manner, because of an excess (and not due to a lack) of civilization, the barbarian is born, this counterstroke which puts civilization in the bag, then the cycle begins again. The development of a civilization is compared to that of living organisms, in which childhood is followed by maturity and then old age and death, stages characterized by a different passionality and reflexivity. The same language would bear witness to the various degrees of vitality of a culture (it is not by chance that one speaks of the becoming barbarian of language²).

If the progressive criticism of the conception of civilization has been guided for the most part by a reactionary point of view (like for example in Spengler and Schmitt) with an abundance of biological and hierarchical metaphors on the struggle for survival, the attacks on the ideology of progress in the name of an enlightenment "other" are not however lacking (for example in Sorel and Adorno) or let loose at the shoulders, with the eyes of the Greeks like in the same Leopardi, in Hölderlin, in Burckhardt and in Nietzsche; or still, from the angle of an artistic-craftsman know-how that mechanized work has destroyed (for example in William Morris).

¹ In Italian "unbarbarismo linguistico" means both the becoming barbarian of language, and the corruption of language, the pun doesn't translate.

The anarchist's desire is to be able to exercise his faculties with the greatest possible intensity, the more he improves himself, the more experience he takes in, the more he destroys obstacles, as much intellectual and moral as material, the more he takes an open field, the more he allows his individuality to expand, the more he becomes free to evolve and the more he proceeds towards the realization of his desire.

But I won't allow myself to get carried away and I'll return more precisely to the subject.

The libertarian who doesn't have the power to carry through an explanation, a critique which he recognizes as well founded or that he doesn't even want to discuss, he responds: "I am free to act like this." The anarchist says: "I think that I am right to act like this but come on." And if the critique made is about a passion which he doesn't have the strength to free himself from, he will add: "I am under the slavery of this anarism and this habit." This simple declaration won't be without cost. It will carry its own force, maybe for the individual attacked, but surely for the individual that made it, and for those who are less attacked by the passion in question.

The anarchist is not mistaken about the domain gained. He does not say "I am free to marry my daughter if that pleases me - I have the right to wear a high style hat if it suits me" because he knows that this liberty, this right are a tribute paid to the morality of the milieu, to the conventions of the world, they are imposed by the outside against all desires, against all internal determinism of the individual.

The anarchist acts thus not due to modesty, or the spirit of contradiction, but because he holds a conception which is completely different from that of the libertarian. He doesn't believe in innate liberty, but in liberty that is acquired. And because he knows that he doesn't possess all liberties, he has a greater will to acquire the power of liberty.



Words do not have a power in themselves. They have a meaning that one must know well, to state precisely in order to allow oneself to be taken by their magic. The great Revolution has made a fool of us with its slogan: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" the libertarians have sung us above all the tune of their "laissez-faire" with the refrain of the freedom of work; Libertarians delude themselves with a belief in a pre-established liberty and they make critiques in its honor... Anarchists should not want the word but the thing. They are against authority, government, economic religious and moral power, knowing the more authority is diminished the more liberty is increased.

It is a relation between the power of the group and the power of the individual. The more the first term of this relation is diminished, the more authority is diminished, the more liberty is increased.

What does the anarchist want? To reach a state in which these two powers are balanced, where the individual has real freedom of movement without ever hindering the liberty of movement of another. The anarchist does not want to reverse the relation so that his freedom is made of the slavery of others, because he knows that authority is bad in itself, as much for he who submits to it as for he who gives it.

To truly know freedom, one must develop the human being until one makes sure that no authority has the possibility of existing.

When the Republic takes its famous slogan: "Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite," does it make us free, equal or brothers? She tells us "You are free" these are vain words since we do not have the power to be free. And why don't we have this power? Principally because we do not know how to acquire the proper knowledge. We take the mirage for reality.

We always wait the freedom of a State, of a Redeemer, of a Revolution, we never work to develop it within each individual. What is the magic wand that transforms the current generation born of centuries of servitude and resignation into a generation of human beings deserving of freedom, because they are strong enough to conquer it?

This transformation will come from the awareness that men will have of not having freedom of consciousness, that freedom is not in them, that they don't have the right to be free, that they are not all born free and equal...and that it is nevertheless impossible to have happiness without freedom. The day that they have this consciousness they will stop at nothing to obtain freedom. This is why anarchists struggle with such strength against the libertarian current that makes one take the shadow for substance.

To obtain this power, it is necessary for us to struggle against two currents that threaten the conquest of our liberty: it is necessary to defend it against others and against oneself, against external and internal forces.

To go towards freedom, it becomes necessary to develop our individuality. When I say: to go towards freedom, I mean for each of us to go toward the most complete development of our Self. We are not therefore free to take any which road, it is necessary to force ourselves to take the correct path. We are not free to yield to excessive and lawless desires, we are obliged to satisfy them. We are not free to put ourselves in a state of inebriation making our personality lose the use of its will, placing us at the mercy of anything; let's say rather that we endure the tyranny of a passion that misery of luxury has given us. True freedom would consist of an act of authority upon this habit, to liberate oneself from its tyranny and its corollaries.

I said, an act of authority, because I don't have the passion of liberty considered *a priori*. I am not a libertarian. If I want to acquire liberty, I don't adore it. I don't amuse myself refusing the act of authority that will make me overcome the adversary that attacks me, nor do I refuse the act of authority that will make me attack the adversary. I know that every act of force is an act of authority. I would like to never have to use force, authority against other men, but I live in the 20th century and I am not free of from the direction of my movements to acquire liberty.

So, I consider the Revolution as an act of authority of some against others, individual revolt as an act of authority of some against others. And therefore I find these means logical, but I want to exactly determine the intention. I find them logical and I am ready to cooperate, if these acts of temporary authority have the removing of a stable authority and giving more freedom as their goal; I find them illogical and I thwart them if their goal isn't removing an authority. By these acts, authority gains power: she hasn't done anything but change name, even that which one has chosen for the occasion of its modification.

Libertarians make a dogma of liberty; anarchists make it an end. Libertarians think that man is born free and that society makes him a slave. Anarchists realize that man is born into the most complete of subordinations, the greatest of servitudes and that civilization leads him to the path of liberty.

That which the anarchists reproach is the association of men-society-which is obstructing the road after having guided our first steps. Society delivers hunger, malignant fever, ferocious beasts-evidently not in all cases, but generally-but she makes humanity prey to misery, overwork, and governments. She puts humanity between a rock and a hard place.² She makes the child forget the authority of nature to place him under the authority of men.

The anarchist intervenes. He does not ask for liberty as a good that one has taken from him, but as a good that one prevents him from acquiring. He observes the present society and he declares that it is a bad instrument, a bad way to call individuals to their complete development.

The anarchist sees society surrounded men with a lattice of laws, a net of rules, and an atmosphere of morality and prejudices without doing anything to bring them out of the night of ignorance. He doesn't have the libertarian religion, liberal one could say but more and more he wants liberty for himself like he wants pure air for his lungs. He decides then to work by all means to tear apart the threads of the lattice, the stitches of the net and endeavors to open wide the aperture of free thought.



² Charybe in Scylla

BABARISM AND NIHILISM: THE DREAM OF ANALOGY

The case of Leopardi is particularly significant. In him we find a Greco-Vicini vision of history (everything repeats itself, but we don't ever know for certain at what point we are in the repetition) a work of revealing--materialist but not dialectical--of the dominant political and religious lies (in its style, if you will, of truth), and a radical affirmation of the vital illusion on which modern science along with the other manifestations of calculating reason, has wreaked havoc. The concept of barbarism is taken by him with ambivalence. He expresses what civilization would be at its highest degree of evolution (for it is not sleep, but rather the totalitarian wakefulness of reason that gives birth to monsters) that vitality and that natural force that is not unharmed by the deadly sophistication of the civilized, and is thus susceptible to wonder and virtue. His concept of barbarism recalls the Nietzschean concept of nihilism, which indicates at the same time an enemy and a necessity, typical Christian resentment in the confrontations between life and the tragic and the creator--*tabula rasa*--of given values. These secret wills of the demon of analogy should not surprise. Can one say that nihilism and barbarism are not two words that, in the mouths of the conservatives as well as in those of the revolutionaries, often change places in this way? How many times have the state and capital been defined nihilist? And even they perhaps deny, those two forbidding monsters, all values? Obedience, competition, reasonable resignation, fussy fatalism, can one say that they are not values? In the same way, that which passes for barbarism is not only the delirious short circuit of this civilization, the flip side of its dreams bottled by psycho-pharmacy and electronic narcotics. On the other hand, what is there outside the present civilization

² This refers to G. B. Vico, the seventeenth century philosopher.

of authority and the market? The barbaric is, very often, that which we are not accustomed to and it is for this reason that it appears to us as the enemy.

AROUND FOUR ANGLES

Maybe the ambivalence of the concept of the barbarian is an indispensable fact, above all if one wants to conserve that intuitive sensibility towards the social forces that burn beneath the judicial bureaucratic and mercantile officialdom of an era, that is if one wants to understand what the forces on the field are.

If the barbarian is a being deprived of *logos*, it is the nature of this *logos* to clarify what its deprivation means. In the *logos* repressive order and human possibility are confused, being at the same time reason, discussion, law and community. To critique progressive ideology cannot consist of a banal overturning of values (for which all that which seems to oppose civilization becomes a positive position) since this would only make us postpone approaching the other four angles of the problem.

It is more fertile to know how to distinguish that which is hypercivilized from that which is decivilized.³ Hypercivilization is the fulfillment (in the double sense of realization and conclusion) of civilization, the totalitarian displaying of its technical power; the "barbarian" of a world that passes without respite from "amusements" to the purges of the masses, from domestic commodities to catastrophe. Decivilization on the contrary is all the material and spiritual autonomy that individuals manage to attain by escaping this robotized society: an anarchy of passions that shakes off domestication. It is not because a river is free from cement dams that it doesn't let itself be conquered by

³ I have chosen to stay close to the original, "decivilized" instead of using the term uncivilized, because this more clearly expresses a process of becoming less civilized.

other rocks, putting its waters on currents which are not its own. But it will never be an artificial lake. To return again to the *logos*, the silence of he who has no more words because electronic alienation has taken them away from him is hypercivilized; he who feels a richness inside himself that he doesn't allow to be trapped with the verb is decivilized. Decivilized is the disorder of he who does not accept any more orders, hypercivilized is the damage caused by he who carries them out with too much zeal. It is about two opposed ways of transcending misery, two enemy forms (of *hybris*, as the Greeks used to say). A society recognizes itself above all from the way in which it represents arrogance, the de-measuring that frightens it.

Hypercivilization--that civilization calls barbarian with the goal of justifying itself--is at the same time a radical distancing from nature and the swamp of a rationality that reveals itself to bring always more coerced madness. The *logos* at the service of power has made law and reason coincide, therefore it has defined submission as reasonable. Discourse has extended its breath of death on all that which does not speak its language; it has leveled the differences, to return finally to monologue, only in the terrible silence of technics.

The "absolute persuasiveness" of technological language is no other than the landing place of a culture that has definitely banished its own barbarians, in this way making everyone a barbarian to the other. The possessors of technical knowledge, necessary to the authoritarian administration of society, strategize to become increasingly fortified against the masses of "sufferers"--foreigners of the outside and inside--that endure their new language without understanding it. Discourse has won, since everybody is silent, or they repeat the 100 words that they possess, among them the most recurrent are *over*, *super*, *zero*, and *mythic*. Through the *logos* of the

market and of instant efficiency, the civilized make entreaties against the monsters that besiege the city, addressing their appeals of peace and civic education to them. But the *polis* is in pieces, and Persuasion has a club in its hand.

Just as the techno-bureaucrats reduce the whole of social life to the demands of the economic and administrative inorganic structure, defining everything that blocks its way as barbarian; in the same way fragmented and mechanical reason joins with technological constructions driving out, like barbarians, the untamed impulses and voices that still inhabit social life. And they are really barbarians, as soon as they set themselves free. No invitation to calm enchants them anymore.

When there is no common language, there is no community, just as, reciprocally when common space dwindles, language can no longer exist. The most important and most obvious consequence of such a condition is that it becomes impossible to come to an agreement. Master Dialogue is no longer among the invited. A collision without protocols or codes is thus the only way, and the contours become those of civil war.

Civil War

The civilized don't oppose anything to war except the ideology of dialogue and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. But to dialogue one needs to also have common values, just as in order to have common values a sharing of places and practice is necessary. Which is the morality, today if one indeed looks yonder where the social fabric is torn and dies, namely beyond political officialdom? They claim and proclaim so-called universal values at the very moment of their disappearance.

Human and civil rights wishing to pacify all of society don't pacify anything anymore. The ideology of the two blocks that contest the global

scene and the hopes of individuals is collapsed together with that of belonging to a working class capable of taking power ("social" if not political) and of reorganizing the world. The certainties with regard to the future offered by science no longer warm the tepid orphan hearts of religion. All that is finished.

Exploitation remains, but the "community" created in order to concentrate the exploited—and their images—explodes. Production, thanks to the telematic, atomizes itself in structures ever more peripheral and spreads across the territory, in the same way that the identities of wage earners are atomized, tied to competence and to pride for that vanished renown that is the craft. Memory eclipses itself before the eternal present which is fabricated in the mass media (only the news counts the rest does not exist). Human communication (in the sense of common engagement) subsequently reduces itself to the continuation of an impoverishment of that which is called culture, which is everyday more profound. Technology recuperates scientific doubt in its favor and makes programmed uncertainty a new ideology in a position to justify any frenzy of control over species and planet. "As long as it lasts," this is the motto of the powerful. And the existence of the exploited is more a holding out than really living. From the school to the workplace, from the family to the shopping mall, only one ability is required: that of adapting oneself. It is civil war: a cohabitation without common values or assurance for the future, an order that unites individuals in their very separation.

And if war is always occurring, there is not much need to declare it—as the case of the recent military intervention in the Balkans shows—to underscore the separation between "times of peace" and times of war" with formal gestures. Permanent war brings new social relations to the international level, just as the old diplomacy of sovereignty of governments extended the confines

and agreements between the state and the representatives of its exploited further. The clash is no longer between national oligarchs, but between finance or Mafia groups (two interchangeable and fundamental forms of money making) that traverse the frontiers and the state apparatus and to which the brutal atomization of society provides a copious and implacable labor. Businessman or gangster, there are only two modes of organizing into economic hands, the only difference is that in the second case the road to riches is richer and shorter.

But this clash without respite traverses the whole of society and its individuals. The conflict sharpens between institutional order—the always more perfected guillotine of civilization—and the ferocious imposition of the relations beneath the burden of constructions. At the same time the tension between the spontaneous activity of the human organism and the preeminence of the external stimulus characteristic of mechanized modern activity is exacerbated; abstract organizing reason engages a battle without precedents with the profound impulses of the individual. The language that the logos has proposed to reclaim, to take back the images with which Freud symbolized the civilizing action of the I on the unconscious, is revealing itself to be more extensive and muddy than ever. The class struggle widens to frighteningly new territories.

It's a question of tendency, it is clear; it is not already uniformly accomplished in fact. Here the civil war is larval; elsewhere it is terribly manifest. But this elsewhere is nearby. Like a former Yugoslavia.

Nationalisms, and ethnic and religious demands are the authoritarian and hierarchical responses to the fall of values, a result in its time of the decline of ancient communitarian forces. Integralisms of various natures are first of all communitarian ideologies, attempting to restore the identity of the logos (that is language,



Freedom

By Albert Libertad

Many think that it is a simple dispute over words that makes some declare themselves libertarians and others anarchists. I have an entirely different opinion.

I am an anarchist and I hold to the label not for the sake of a vain garnishing of words, but because it means a philosophy, a different method than that of the libertarians.

The libertarian, as the word indicates, is an adorer of liberty¹. For him, it is the beginning and end of all things. To become a cult of liberty, to write its name on all the walls, to erect statues illuminating the world, to talk about it in season and out, to declare oneself free of hereditary determinism when its Marxist and encompassing movements make you a slave...this is the achievement of the libertarian.

The anarchist, referring simply to etymology, is against authority. That's exact. He doesn't make liberty the causality but rather the finality of the evolution of his Self. He doesn't say, even when it concerns interest of his acts, "I am free," but "I want to be free". For him, freedom is not an entity, a quality, something that one has or doesn't have, but is a result that he obtains to the degree that he obtains power.

He doesn't make freedom into a right that existed before him, before human beings, but a science that he acquires, that humans acquire, day after day, to free themselves of ignorance, abolishing the shackles of tyranny and property.

Man is not free to act or not to act, by his will alone. He learns to do or not to do when he has exercised his judgement, enlightened his ignorance, or destroyed the obstacles that stand in his way. So if we take the position of a libertarian, without musical knowledge in the front of his piano, is he free to play? NO! He won't have this freedom until he has learned music and to play the instrument. This is what the anarchist says. He also struggles against the authority that prevents him from developing his musical aptitudes when he has them or he who withholds the piano. To have the freedom to play, he has to have the power to know and the power to have a piano at his disposition. Freedom is a force that one must know how to develop within the individual; no one can grant it.

¹ I use the word liberty and freedom interchangeably throughout the piece. In all cases the word *liberte* was used in the original. The English word freedom is closer to A. Libertad's use of the word but because of the connection between the word *Libertaire* (Libertarian) and *Liberty*, I sometimes switch to Liberty.

few years, Kosovo would have the chance to become independent. The agreement also stated that NATO could move forces over the whole of Yugoslavia and alter the infrastructure of Yugoslavia as it saw fit. The agreement gave NATO the right to control the economy of Kosovo and stated: "The economy of Kosovo shall function in accordance with free market principles, and that there must be complete compliance with the dictates of the IMF and World Bank."

On the 19th of March, Clinton announced that the bombing would begin soon (it started five days later). Thus, the Serbs were given five days to do what they liked in Kosovo. The first week of bombing was aimed at targets outside of Kosovo, giving the Serbs even more time to clear strategic villages of the KLA. Why did NATO do this? It wasn't bad planning on the part of NATO; they had been planning the attack for 14 months. NATO was letting the Serbs give them justification for their bombing which would bring European public opinion in line with the campaign. As the bombings wore on, the Serbs didn't tow the US line and commit wholesale genocide. Nor did they quickly cave in to US demands. At that point, the Serbs and Russians tried to end the war through diplomacy, threatening to undermine the US hard-line. This process was ended, however, when the US bombed the Chinese embassy (it has since come out that the Chinese were retransmitting radio signals for the Serbian Army, and the bombing certainly seems to have been no mistake at all). When NATO finally brought the war to an end, the US had reasserted its control over NATO policy and rebuilt the role of NATO in managing global conflict. In addition, through the conflict the US had extended the authority of NATO to act independently of the UN and the Security Council, thus sidestepping Russian and Chinese attempts to counter US hegemony.

After the war, the US agreed to the same conditions that the Serbs had proposed before the war. The two conditions of the US ultimatum that Milosevic had originally opposed—NATO access to Serbia and a NATO only occupying force in beyond the terms of a local conflict. The war must be understood in terms of a conjunction of both global and local forces: the restructuring demands of global capital through the IMF, the workers' resistance to attacks on their livelihood, the factional struggle for power within the Yugoslav state, and the attempt by the US to maintain hegemony.

As IMF rationalization began to bite into the Yugoslav economy in the 1980s, a strong working class responded with a wave of strikes. Caught between the institutions of global capital and a rebellious populace, the Yugoslav central government was weakened leaving a space for rising nationalist politicians, who took on a new form of mediation between capital and the working class. These politicians generated a nationalism that split the working class and channeled their revolt. Nationalism, therefore, was less a reaction against global capitalism than a form of mediation that allowed a new elite to come to power and to implement drastic economic measures. At the same time, the Yugoslav crisis afforded the US an opportunity to reconstitute its role in Europe and, thus, maintain its hegemonic position vis-à-vis Western Europe and Russia.

Of course, working class and anti-systemic revolt continues, which brings up the issue of solidarity. In Kraljevo, Serbia there was mass draft refusal in March, 2000. Residents greeted draft officials with sticks and agricultural tools. Only 15% of reservists from that town showed up when called to duty. In the neighboring town of Cacak, residents took over the local TV station and placed a 24 hour armed guard there and bear traps around the station. There have been several similar acts of defiance recently in other Serbian cities. Solidarity with these acts of insurrection should not be only verbal, for such solidarity is empty. We need to attack capital in solidarity with the struggles of Serbs who refuse nationalism and refuse to measure their lives with the ruler of international capital.

Further Reading:

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laws, and order) while common space diminishes. It's about the hypercivilized reaction to that virtual community that is everywhere supplanting real reciprocity between individuals. The instruments of civilization—technological "welfare", democratic dialogue, parliamentary legality, humanitarian and mercantile universalism—are impotent since they are part of the problem.

Destroy everything to remake everything

Capitalism, in its historic development, has unified the exploited in work and in alienation, determining them as a programmatic class, that is, capable of political and social programming. The struggles of the dispossessed have found themselves linked (through places, instruments, class-consciousness) with the very structure of capital. The awareness that the worker "can destroy everything" because he can remake everything" responded to his concrete possibility of making the society without masters function. It's not interesting to explore further which ideologies (determinism, productivism, reformist gradualism, scientism etc) had produced that condition, nor in which forms of self organization of the exploited (worker's councils, agrarian collectives, etc.) it had already come to life. That which is worth noting is that an entire project of emancipation, in its bureaucratic and authoritarian falsifications like in its libertarian authenticity, depended on it; and this is part of the vision of a future society, and the methods of struggle (union activity, general strike as a cause of insurrection, armed party, etc) to destroy capitalist society. Today all that has finished, and with it also its illusions.

The problem, as it is usual to say, is complex. It would be attacked from both sides of the social barricade: from the side of a capital that is extended to all social relations and that wants to valorize the whole day of the exploited; and from the side of the dangerous classes that no longer

have political or union programs. Considering these first reflections it will be enough to say that the places of production no longer contain resistance to capital, which is becoming directly social. If that makes daily life itself the authentic place of social war, and can therefore increase the knowledge that nothing of these social relations is worth saving, the consequence is at the same time the disappearance of practical unification—the *logos* of class—from beneath the feet of the exploited. Where to meet and begin such change? Will it be a cube that, wherever injured life explodes, the isolated riots are thus often substituting the old general wildcat strikes? But how can revolts dialogue at a distance, in order to snatch away how much more possible time and space as inevitable institutionalization waits?

Without direct relations there is no communication, without communication there is no social utopia. In this sense, there are always more barbarians in the world.

But not only in this sense. Authentic community is the one which is based on the autonomy of individuals, that of the community of difference, in which everyone wants to know the thoughts of the other as different from ones own. It is the feeling that a *one* universal reason does not exist, that pushes people to communicate, to enrich with the game of proximity and of the subtleties of their language. A language dies when thoughts no longer deserve to be communicated, by now all desolately identical, when they lose the dreams which nourish its poetry. Only a diverse life, individual, gives birth to diverse thoughts.

To decivilized hearts and minds

Vitality is found today in the least civilized conditions. The "barbarian" of technical reason destroys great illusions, these eternal forces of confusion, attacking the very source of life. But illusions that push to outbursts of passion are born for the

most part wherever humans conserve the instinct of the herd, that the atomized multitude has modified. For this reason nationalism and integralism offer two false solutions to lead social dissatisfaction by hand, with a mixture of ideals of purification, rituals of atonement and millenarian expectation. What is there in the greatest of ethnic and religious conflicts to create artificial enemies and in this way lock up every protest against the established order? The difference of the immigrant, of belonging to a different ethnicity, is visible and comprehensible, unlike the difference of the exploited, which don't have a nation. In their telematic fortress, they are speaking one single Esperanto: that of the market, that nevertheless does not inflame the old ardors of faith. If it is necessary, the new propaganda can wave the old patriotic and divine rags to continue its own monologue eliminating the restless and numerous exploited. In the name of civilization naturally. But the illusions are of the barbarians always of the door, those that ruthlessly transform the violence with which they are expelled.

More and more, from such a situation of civil war—that is not an all against all but an all against an interchangeable and whole one—there are only two possible exits: ethnic and Mafia wars or the social tempest of class struggle. The nationalist or religious lie, in certain areas carefully prepared by the mass media, is only the last card that domination can play in face of the danger of a generalized revolt. In fact, contrary to the determinist fable of the end of history, or all the reformism of revolutionaries in step with the times, the possibility for immense popular uprisings does not wait for the occasion to explode. Recent examples, even those two steps away from us, are not lacking.

In face of the feeling of dispossession that many individuals experience towards a mercantile standardization that constricts everyone to dream the same lifeless dream, humanitarian universalism is as much a liar as the "differentialism"—hierarchical and

interclass--of the new right. Real differences are thoroughly affirmed (well beyond those of cultural and linguistic belonging) only in the free and reciprocal game of singularity. Real equality (not legal) is the sharing of that which we have most in common: the fact of being all different. A community of unique individuals without a state or classes, or money: that is the utopia of decivilized hearts and minds. A utopia that, like each conquest of the marvellous, will be born only from destruction and filth.

The wind of thaw

To once again take up the thesis of the Barbarians as the men and women closest to communism today, would not brighten the powerful intuition that the anarchists Coeurderoy and Dejeune had in the last century, but would be first of all tranquilizing, a simple turning on its head of the ideology of progress. Civilization is ripe, suppression is about to hatch--this determinism would make us take sparks for fire, without this making us more determined. But perhaps this is not the point. We are not partisans of democratic integration nor of legal and reformist battles, this is sure. We foresee only free accord in the anarchic movement of social forces. In the barbaric assaults against every domestication. And still. Are we not at bottom the last civilized people, with our values, other, individual, but still values? Is not the search for perilous virtues, for us, the source of the marvellous?

It is useless to hide from ourselves that social explosions scare everyone, including the subversives. They also scare us. Above all when there aren't expectations for a diverse life, when popular uprisings mix with the worst communitarianisms or with the disconnected outbursts of a moribund society. The flip-side of calculating reason is found in the collective dreams and in the reality the salvific myths of sacrifice and of self destruction keep under cover. The "liberation of customs" after having modernized morality, transmits

directly to technology, this power on this side of good and evil, the control of consciousness. All this certainly does not make us grieve the old political programs and the orthopedics of their civilization, capable of averting violence in but one way: by institutionalizing it. But this does not push us towards hidden certainties of regeneration. We do not sweat on decadence. Capital--and not the revolutionaries--has liquidated all the programs, bringing great possibilities of liberation and inalienable centralist illusions to the same tomb. As the terrorism of progress says, it does not turn back. But even to turn oneself around backwards, along the dead tracks of this senseless production of commodities and of dependence, it is necessary to find the right path. And then where is?

That which is lacking today are adequate projectual hypotheses--ideas and methods--for the new conditions of the conflict; but maybe above all what is lacking is that sense of defiance that is ethical tension and dreaming together, that great passion for free discussions and for resolute action.

If from one side one doesn't believe that History (or Wild Nature) works in its place, from the other one can see only the social freeze on the horizon that feels the powerful blowing of the wind of thaw.

A faraway whisper

In 1870 facing the invasion of France by the Prussia of Bismarck, History seemed at the crossroads; and the revolutionary movement was divided. Marx and those who shared the analyses seen in the Prussian victory, the most developed strengthening of capitalism in Europe and therefore by virtue of the incarnations of dialectics, the consolidation of the historical conditions for that inevitable birth of communism which lacked only the forces, that is, a united and disciplined urban proletariat. Bakunin and other libertarians saw in militarism and the bismarckian

bureaucratic order the forecast of dozens of reactions in Europe, after France appeared to them by its tradition, as the birthplace of every revolutionary hope. For the brightest to defend France did not mean that they would collaborate with the state and with the French bourgeoisie against the enemy invader, but to transform the military conflict into social insurrection, passing from armed proletarian defense to the creation and the federation of revolutionary Communes. On that disastrous situation of civil war, Bakunin, engaged a few minutes afterwards in an insurrectional attempt at Lyon, wrote one of his best analyses which concentrated on the union of workers and peasants and on the necessity to everywhere substitute the deed for the revolutionary fight, popular anarchy for the Jacobean terrorism of political decrees and administrative officialdom. For him it was a matter of "the unchaining of bad passions". But it is not that story, and its lessons that we want to talk about. (To ask ourselves already what would be able to bring forth the spontaneity of the masses of young people born in the cybernetic age would bring us far). That which returns to our memories of those days is only a whisper. The same that brought Bakunin to write that the French proletariat could count on only one desperate force: that of the devil in the body. A few months later, against the predictions of the same Russian revolutionary, the devil was on the barricades of Paris.

Civil war, the "barbarian", this spectacular antithesis with which the masters of the world and their servants have always justified themselves; this blackmail that has extorted the capacity of the oppressed, becomes more and more our condition. The federation of revolutionary Communes seems to move further away, while the "bad passions" stay with us without any pretence of organizing unalarming. The demon does not let itself be programmed, even less so today.



and the leaders of the strikes were arrested. At the same time, Serbs began to form paramilitaries. In March 1989 when the Kosovo assembly agreed to accept direct rule from Belgrade, Kosovo workers rioted until they were violently suppressed. By 1989, Milosevic was in control of the Kosovo, Vojvodina, as well as Serbian, votes at the federal level. The center was losing hold and the nationalist republics were competing with the working class to fill the void. Unlike in the 1960s, when radical students and intellectuals joined the worker's movement, in the late 1980s intellectuals joined the Serb nationalists--those of the Praxis group, for example. Serb intellectuals participated in this process of "nationalizing" the crisis by rewriting Serb history. The anti-communist Chetniks were rehabilitated. Sympathy for pre-World War II, Serb bourgeois politicians was invoked. More serious, the Yugoslav State was painted as being hostile to the natural nationalism of the Serb people. The prime enemy, however, was the Kosovo Albanians, who were represented as attacking Serbs and interrupting the integrity of the Serb state. The conflict with the Albanians was also represented as part of an eternal conflict between ethnic groups. These views were broadcast widely as Milosevic took firm control of media.

In 1989, the federal government continued its economic reforms still trying to deal with its large debt. The reforms targeted large industries for privatization or bankruptcy. These reforms, under the guidance of the IMF and World Bank, lightened the money supply and, thus, speeded up the bankruptcy process. In 1989, almost 100,000 workers were fired out of an industrial work force of 2.7 million. In 1990, a new IMF/World Bank program was adopted that funneled even more money into debt payments and put another 500,000 workers out of work and 1.3 million more were targeted for future layoffs. Even more firms attempted to avoid bankruptcy by not paying wages. The 1990 program also deregulated trade, allowing a flood of imports. There were violent strikes throughout the republics in response to these changes forcing a postponement of both the privatization of enterprises and the abandonment of the so-called self-management apparatus.

While these latest reforms ate their way through the lives of Yugoslavia's workers, separatist coalitions ousted the Communists in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia. The German government, with its eyes on cheap workers, quickly recognized Croatia and Slovenia and pushed the EC to encourage "ethnically based" nations. Slovenia and Croatia were the wealthiest of the Yugoslavian republics. This was a result of the fact that they had both been a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire, they endured less infrastructural damage during WWII, and they had had strong ties with German and Italian Capital. This wealth was one of the main reasons these two republics tried to secede first, and it explains the growth of nationalism among the Slovenian and Croatian elite. The Yugoslav State demanded money for development funds for the poorer republics, whereas independence promised increased trade with Germany and therefore economic gain for the Croatian and Slovenian elite. Soon after Germany recognized the republics the wars between these states and Serbia began. These wars destroyed what was left of working class solidarity. At the same time, Milosevic's position was strengthened over Serbian workers: he was now able to deepen his attack on their living conditions. The results for US hegemony were far more ambiguous: US policy in the Balkans had not defined a clear and dominant role for the US in the management of global conflict. But the growing conflict over Kosovo offered them a new opportunity to rebuild their hegemonic position in Europe.

The Kosovo War:

For over a year before the Kosovo war, Europe and Russia conflicted with the US over Kosovo policy. In particular, the US sabotaged every attempt at peaceful settlement of the issue up to the point that it launched the war and invited the killing of Kosovo Albanians. Through this, the US was able to cut Russia out of the decision making process and channel the Europeans into supporting its policy. After the Dayton accords, the US had supported the maintenance of the borders of what remained of Yugoslavia. In 1998, the US administration's policy with regard to Kosovo was reversed. This was due in part to the 1998 financial crisis which had destabilized Russia, creating an increased possibility of an ultra-nationalist/communist alliance. Russia was also a threat to the further spread of NATO allied states in Eastern Europe. Beginning in 1998, the US sent conflicting signals to Serbia. The US stated publicly that it thought the Serbians were going to do in Kosovo what they did in Bosnia and that the US would not let that happen. At the same time, the US stated that it believed the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was a terrorist group, thus encouraging Serbian counter-insurgency measures. Also in 1998, the Serbians indicated that they would agree to a negotiated solution to the Kosovo situation including a degree of autonomy for the region. This solution was being pushed by Europe and Russia, and the Rugova Albanian opposition in Kosovo came to support it as well. Only the KLA and the US (especially Albright) opposed the plan. While Richard Holbrooke, Albright's rival in the Clinton administration, did negotiate a cease-fire in October, the White House undermined it. They reorganized the "monitoring force" in order to use it to survey the infrastructure of Kosovo to facilitate a future NATO attack. The KLA stepped up its attacks as noted by the Europeans.

Meanwhile, the French pushed for negotiations which began in Rambouillet, France in February, 1999. But real negotiations never occurred. Before they were to begin, the US brought the French and the British in line. The Serbs wanted face to face negotiations as, it seems, did the Rugova (Albanian) government of Kosovo. Yet the US replaced the elected Rugova government with the KLA at the last moment, and instead of negotiations, the Serbians were given an ultimatum. They were told they had to sign the US written agreement or it would be war. Even though the agreement wouldn't have been legally binding under international law as it would have been made under threat of aggression, the Serbs didn't sign it. The US knew the Serbs couldn't sign. Under the "agreement" NATO, not the Albanians, would have controlled Kosovo. After a

the state and economy. However, at the same time the Yugoslav economy was in trouble; it was much more exposed to the international economy than other 'Communist' countries and was running a huge deficit that was paid for by foreign borrowing. Due to the high cost of money since the 1976 oil crisis, the cost of financing this debt shot up tremendously. By 1980, Yugoslavia had a foreign debt of \$14 billion, they joined the IMF that year in order to finance their debt. Therefore in the early 80s, the government tried to cut imports and raise exports. At the same time, more and more corporations began operating at a loss. The less developed regions of Yugoslavia (Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia) suffered the worst. Unemployment began to rise.

In the early 1980s, the IMF imposed strict conditions on Yugoslavia in return for a postponement on a small portion of the national debt. This process that the IMF began must be seen as part of a conscious strategy by the US and probably Europe to bring the Yugoslav economy firmly under the control of global capitalist institutions.) Under these conditions, most prices were to be set by the market, interest rates were hiked, the Yugoslav currency (the dinar) was devalued, and the level of consumption by the average Yugoslav was to be cut drastically. The terms for foreign business investment were also relaxed. And, with the devaluation of the dinar, labor power became very cheap. Foreign businesses, especially from West Germany, Italy and Austria, set up small factories there to exploit the situation created by the IMF. The rise in interest rates meant that many more companies fell into bankruptcy and unemployment rose even further. As with all IMF restructurings, in Yugoslavia it was the working class that was to pay for the debt. Wage controls, which squeezed the working class, were set by the federal government. This was the final blow to the already weakened 'self-management' system.

The IMF operated through the central government and encouraged the centralization of control over the economy at the federal level. And it was through the federal government that the IMF decided which region was going to prosper and which region was not, perpetuating preexisting inequalities between republics. This was one cause for the resurgence of nationalism in the mid-to late 1980s. By 1984 many workers were being paid primarily in food. There was not much more that could be squeezed out of the workers. As one Yugoslav economist put it, "It is true that the workers have not eaten the accumulation; but they will nevertheless have to pay for all the wrong investment made by borrowing abroad. Somebody must pay, and it must be industry." Meanwhile, the Party was at a loss what to do. They were stuck between the working class—which was where their legitimacy came from—and the IMF. In their vacillation, the IMF took charge. As the center of the Party was split from what working-class support it had, it began to fracture.

As the Party increasingly committed itself to a liberalization of the economy under the pressure of the IMF, the social welfare of the working class was ignored. Strike activity increased in 1987 in response to wage cuts, particularly in Zagreb and Belgrade, bringing the whole party-class alliance into to an end. 1988 saw the largest wave of strikes yet. In Eastern Croatia, Croatian and Serb workers united to strike but by two years later, in 1990, this alliance had been broken. By the end of 1988, the massive strikes had forced the leaders of the federal government to resign. Under this tension, the federal and republic states came into greater and greater conflict. And it was nationalism that provided the clearest tool for the republican governments to channel the worker revolt to their advantage. With the loss of the legitimizing party-class alliance and in a bind between the IMF and a combative working class it was ethnic nationalism that provided legitimacy for republican governments.

By 1987, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Montenegro were bankrupt. Bosnia-Herzegovina was also in trouble. And with the vacillation of the center, power shifted into the hands of the leaders of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. The economic crisis pushed the republic and provincial parties to entrench themselves in local nationalist constituencies. In a period of economic collapse, the Macedonian party channeled the despair of the working class into a nationalist, anti-Albanian form. Slovenia, where the economic situation was not so bad, took a turn towards democracy. In Serbia, a sharp intra-party struggle and a very combative working class led to a very nationalist reaction by some within the Serbian Communist Party in order to contain the worker revolts and take control of the Republic.

The Serbian Republic contained two Autonomous Provinces, Vojvodina (over 50% Serb) and Kosovo (90% Albanian). As the Serb Party tried to centralize its control and move to a more nationalist stance, both provinces, but Kosovo in particular, stood in its way. At the same time, Kosovo offered certain factions of the Serb elite an opportunity to channel worker revolt. As economic conditions worsened (unemployment was over 50% for the working class), Serbs in Kosovo played the nationalism card. In 1987, Serbs in Kosovo began to create Serb only factories to protect against the massive layoffs of workers in the province. The 1981 Albanian movement for Republic status was described as a 'counter-revolution' and Serb leaders in Kosovo who sent delegates to Belgrade to lobby for 'protection.' This situation became central to the power struggle within the Serbian Communist Party. Two factions had developed: the 'liberal' faction led by Stambolic and the conservative-nationalist faction led by Milosevic. Milosevic built his support by channelling worker discontent into Serb nationalism, especially against the Albanians, and, in 1987, Milosevic won the Party struggle and Stambolic was out. In 1988, Vojvodina lost its status as an autonomous province and Kosovo was brought under the rule of the Serbian Party. Milosevic's party and the media under his control encouraged huge nationalist protests in Belgrade. The federal government called on the Serbian Party to end the demonstrations, but Milosevic refused. When the Serbian party imposed its own officials on Kosovo's assembly in February 1989, Albanians, under pressure from both nationalist Serbs and terrible economic conditions, began a general strike led by miners in order to demand the reinstatement of Kosovo's autonomy. Support for the strike came from workers in Croatia and Slovenia. A state of emergency was declared, troops were sent in,

CAUGHT IN THE WEB OF DECEPTION: Anarchists and the Media

As long as the present social order exists, it will be impossible to avoid interaction with the various facets of the power structure. Those of us who call ourselves anarchists need to choose to make these interactions clearly adversarial and conflictual, reflecting our desire to destroy the power structure completely. Such a choice requires knowledge of the enemy. Almost every anarchist recognizes that the state and capital are facets of the power structure and has some minimal understanding of how these function as such. Increasing numbers of anarchists are recognizing that technology and ideology are also part of the network of power. One would think that from this they would draw the due conclusion that the technological system for the dissemination of ideology, the media (I use the word media to refer specifically to this system in its totality, not to refer to specific tools it uses to carry out its function, since some of these tools can be used in different manner, even against this function), is an inherent part of the power structure and, therefore, an enemy of all rebellion and every attempt to create free life. Yet even in the face of the intense concentration of the media into a very few mega-corporational hands (a fact that should reveal something of its nature), there are still some anarchists who will directly—and in a nonconflictual manner—interact with it in an attempt to communicate anarchist ideas on its terrain. This shows a lack of understanding of how the media functions.

The media plays a specific role in the power structure, a role that, in a democratic state, becomes not only essential, but also central to the functioning of power. But before continuing, it is necessary to confront the illusions many have about democracy. While it is true that democracy can merely mean a decision-making process which offers all involved a say or a vote in each decision (why this is incompatible with anarchy is a subject best dealt with at another time for the sake of brevity), in the present era, democracy is also and more essentially a system of state and social power which maintains social peace by allowing the expression of the broadest possible spectrum of opinions. The democratic state is able to allow such a broad spectrum of opinion precisely because opinions are basically substanceless. Opinions are ideas that have been drained of all vitality. Separated from life and from any projectual basis, they have become harmless blathering that ultimately strengthens the democratic state by making it appear tolerant and open as compared to feudal or dictatorial states.

From this, the political function of the media should be obvious. It is the mediator and processor of democratic opinion. It devours the complexities of life and social interaction, of international relations and insurgency, of cultural breakdown and economic necessity... the totality of reality in the present, and mashes them to mush between its teeth, then digests them and shifts out... turds. All of the complexities, all of the vitality, all connection to real life has been leached out, and we are left to decide whether these nearly identical brown lumps sink or not. The reality from which these turds were produced is so distant that we "know" that we can't effect it directly, so instead we buy the binary logic of the democratic state, argue at the pub over the stinkiness of turds and vote for those politicians whose bullshit exudes the sweetest aroma. To be for or against this war, that law, whatever candidate, policy or program is no threat whatsoever to power. The purpose of the media is precisely to promote the predigested thinking that keeps us passive in the face of a distant reality, always ready to choose between the options offered by the democratic state, options that all end up subjecting the choosers to the power of the state and capital.

The media has another essential function. It is the creator of images for consumption. It creates celebrities and personalities for people to look up to and vicariously live through. It creates role images for people to imitate in order to invent their "identity". It creates images of events separated from and placed above life. It is through these images, ingested uncritically, that people are to view and interpret the world, formulating their opinions out of this virtual unreality. To the extent that the media succeeds, the result is a passive, predictable population consuming the trash dished out by the social order.

In choosing to seek to get one's ideas across through the media, one is choosing to feed these ideas to this masticating monster, to offer one's self to this life-draining ghoul. For anarchists this makes no sense. It is impossible for the media to portray anarchism as a living praxis or anarchists as complex multi-dimensional individuals. It is therefore not possible to express anarchist ideas in a worthwhile way through this forum. The ideas will be chewed up and spat out as one opinion among many, one more turd about whose odor the public can argue. The living individuals get chewed up and spat out as images—of freaks, of intellectual brooders, of street rioters—but essentially as images: not living, acting beings. The media is part of the power structure, and, as such, is our enemy. We can't play their game and win.

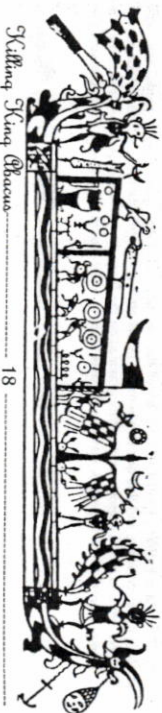
An outstanding example of how this process works can be seen on the segment about anarchists that appeared on *Minutes* shortly after the demonstrations against the WTO in Seattle. This twelve-minute collage of interviews and images was probably the best that anarchists could expect from cooperating with the media. And from start to finish the media carried out its task. From over two hours of interviews and several hours of video footage from the events in Seattle, the show's editors selected what they (or their bosses) wanted to use to make up this brief segment. Using the title, "The New Anarchists", already these experts in mediation had made a separation between the viewers and these new "celebrities", this "new" subculture. The image-building specialists interviewed the one they called the "philosophical guide" separately from the other anarchists; the interviewer and this one to whom the media attributed a guiding role sat face-to-face as peers. The other anarchists were interviewed as a group, some of them seated on the floor, the camera angle leaving the impression that all were seated lower than the interviewer. A viewer who didn't know better would be left with the impression that these

"new anarchists" are followers of leader, even if he is only called a "philosophical guide". The interviewer very clearly directed what was said with his questions—this is his specialty after all. By allowing the interview to pass in normal fashion, these anarchists played right into the hands of the media. By answering the questions, they weakened their arguments, fell into clichés such as the dull old saw about property destruction not being violence and helped to further marginalize and spectacularize themselves. I have not yet seen a media depiction of these "new anarchists", of the "Eugene anarchists" (a term that anarchists in Eugene would do well to destroy as soon as possible), or whatever term the particular journalist, interviewer or newspaper chooses to use that was not this manipulative—because that's how the media functions.

In the wake of the demonstrations in Seattle, there has been a lot of attention paid to anarchists in the media, particularly focusing on the question of property destruction. Much has come out of this that I find disturbing though not surprising. Some anarchists have begun to worry about their media image. Thus there are those anarchists who condemn property destruction because it will give anarchists a bad public image. But these are so ridiculous that they disturb me less than those who publicly insist that "property destruction is not violence." By using this argument that they disturb me less than those media anarchists are letting themselves get drawn into the values of this society; they are measuring their words to fit them into the viewpoint of democratic dialogue. This viewpoint seeks to force revolutionary action to fit into the moral equation of violence/nonviolence. For anarchists who determine their actions for themselves, on their own terms, such equations are useless; they have no significance. Central to anarchist activity in the present is the necessity to destroy the state, capital, and all institutions of power and authority in order to create the possibility for every individual to fully realize herself as she sees fit. Such total destruction—the destruction of a world-encompassing civilization—will be violent. There is no sense in denying or apologizing for this. What each of us does to achieve this is determined by each individual in terms of her desires, dreams, capabilities and circumstances—in terms of the life he is seeking to create for herself. It has no relationship to any sort of morality. Therefore, as anarchists, we have no use for dealing with such questions as: "Is property destruction violence or not?" Is this an act of self-defense or offensive attack? We have no reason to care. Our desire is to attack and destroy all power structures and this determines our actions. These other questions are based on the hypocritical moral rules of power that serve no other purpose than to place weighted chains on our ability to act. So of what use is it to us to speak to the media about these questions on its terms, using its guidelines of how to speak of these matters and following its protocol? In fact, of what use is it to us to talk to the media at all?

In dealing with the media on its terms, one chooses to give up determining one's own actions on one's own terms. As the 60 Minutes episode made so clear, dealing with the media on its terms is accepting delegation. One turns one's ideas over to the masters of "communication" to be massaged into more opinions in the ideological marketplace. One gives the reality of one's life over to these experts in separation to be turned into 60-second images of isolated events. One turns the activity of communication over to those whose specialty is the one way "communication" of devalued, pre-digested non-ideas and non-events that create social consensus. And then one complains about how badly one was represented in the media. Why did one choose to be represented at all? The choice to accept media representation is no less an acceptance of delegation than voting or unionism. The rejection of delegation, so central to an anarchist and insurrectional perspective, includes the refusal to deal with the media on its terms.

If we take self-determination and self-activity as fundamental bases for anarchist practice, the way to communicate our ideas is clearly to create our own means of communication. Graffiti, posters, communiques, papers, magazines and pirate radio can all be used to express anarchist ideas without putting them through the masticating mechanisms of the media. These self-determined means of communication can be distinguished from the media in that they are not attempts to mediate opinions and images while claiming objectivity and dishing out pre-digested pulp to a passive audience; they are actual attempts on the part of anarchists to express their ideas not only in the words but also in the method through which they go about expressing them. Of course these methods, which we can take into our own hands, will not get out to nearly as many people as a mainstream newspaper, magazine or television show. But such considerations could only be of significance to those who want to evangelize, to those who view anarchy as a belief system to which we must convert people if there is ever to be a revolution. To paraphrase some Italian comrades: if one has no commodities to sell, of what use are neon signs? And in the era of the reign of capital, evangelism—even anarchist evangelism—is ideological marketing. To those whose interest is creating their lives as their own and destroying the society that prevents this, such marketing is worthless. Unfortunately, since the anti-WTO actions in Seattle, the media has been drooling over the anarchist morcel, and there have been anarchists willing to give it what it wants. Undoubtedly, the media will continue to hound anarchists for as long as anarchy is a marketable item. It is therefore necessary that we anarchists recognize that the media is part of the structure just like the state, capital, religion, law... In other words, the media is our enemy and we should treat it as such. In this light, the action of three Italian anarchists—Arturo, Lance and Drew—becomes exemplary. When a journalist invaded the funeral of their comrade in search of a juicy morsel of news, they beat him.



William King Rancas

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Capitalism at the crossroads and the opportunity of the Yugoslav crisis

The Yugoslav crisis has spanned the entire post cold war transition period for capitalism. This crisis has given the US an opportunity to reshape world institutions and rebuild its hegemony over the world capitalist system. The war over Kosovo was the high point in US strategic operations to maintain its hegemony over Europe so far in the post-Soviet era. This article looks at the Kosovo situation from two perspectives, that of US hegemonic interests and that of localized struggles within the context of global capitalism. In doing so it attempts to undermine the dominant mystifying stories told about the Yugoslav crisis and our present world system, many of which are often acritically accepted by anarchists and those on the left. The rhetoric that frames globalization as a lessening of government control misses the obvious reality that this lessening of control applies only to capital and not to people. The process of "globalization" of capital is achieved through an alliance between state and capital, just like its close cousins, imperialism and colonialism—only now the state is retooled.

Global context:

With the fall of the Soviet Union, the old global institutions set up to manage capitalism and the international state-system were no longer tuned to operate smoothly with global capitalism. While the US was certainly in the dominant position economically and militarily in the post-Soviet world, US political hegemony over Europe was weakening. The Soviet threat had provided the US with the role of protector of Europe and this allowed the US to gain political control in Western Europe in order to maintain and extend its interests (especially the direction of accumulation strategies) on the continent. Thus NATO was the institutional key to US hegemony in Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990 brought about a radical shift in the balance of power. The US lost its primary role in Europe. At the same time, European countries, Germany in particular, began to pursue a more independent policy. US allies were beginning to threaten US interests. Germany, for example, was well placed to take advantage of the opening of Eastern Europe to capitalist investment. The UN Security Council was another institution of the old post-war order that the US needed to reconfigure. In response, the UN Security Council was in order to reshape its role in respect to Europe and the global economy. The crisis in Yugoslavia has been the primary terrain on which the US has attempted to carve out a new, but still dominant, position. In particular, the US has undermined the role of the UN Security Council and expanded US authority to act independently of any international mandate. European countries also tried to stake out a position independent of the US on what action to take in Kosovo, but they were out-flanked by the US. Not only did Kosovo offer the US an opportunity to reassert its hegemony, but, in doing so, make the US war in Kosovo seem like an inept or evil response to local events. Therefore, we have to be weary of arguments that crisis as an opportunity to reorganize and reinvigorate its role in the world. For the US, the war was a strategic response to a much greater problem, that of maintaining its hegemony over the global economy. It was, therefore, part of the same process that created the World Trade Organization and the retooling of international trade laws.

The retooling of global institutions within this new context includes the retooling of the nation-state. It does not mean that the nation-state is disappearing—it certainly still has an extremely important role in the new world order—only that its role is changing. This is something that anarchists and anti-authoritarians must theoretically map out. We must also not fall back on a simplistic position of supporting the old system of nation-states against the new—as some anarchists have proposed—as if the state could ever be used to overthrow the capitalist economy.

The IMF, capitalist rationalization and the mediating force of Nationalism

The story of Serbian and Albanian nationalism is usually told in terms of an eternal conflict that periodically bubbles to the surface. The explosion of nationalism in the late 80s and 90s is explained as a natural outpouring of nationalism that had been suppressed by the Communist State. Here, we tell a different story. One that shows that there is nothing natural about nationalism, but instead, that the violence that occurred in Yugoslavia was the combined result of global capitalist forces, local working-class action, and Serb state reaction. The US took advantage of this situation to pursue its global strategic goals. In order to denaturalize the recent Yugoslav ethnic conflict in recent years, we have to place the story in this context and spell out the history of these combined forces.

In the 1970s, the specter of nationalism rose in Yugoslavia. This was due largely to the contractions of Market Socialism, which allowed a very uneven development of the Yugoslav economy. Tito responded in 1974 by recentralizing

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William King Rancas



THE PERSISTENT REFUSAL OF PARADISE

by Penelope Nin

It is rumored that we (a "we" not well-defined whose lack of definition suits the rumor-mongers) have nothing to do with anarchism, being in reality nihilists disguised for the purpose of penetrating into the sanctuary of anarchy with bad intentions. It is noted that one who takes up the task of guarding the temple ends up seeing thieves everywhere, and maybe the hour has come to quiet "our" troubled detractors.

First of all, they must explain what they mean by nihilism. Personally, I view anyone who extols the joys of nihilism to me with suspicion because I consider nihilism, as the substantiation of nothing, to be a deception. When the incompleteness of all is cultivated with a feeling of fullness, it is difficult to resist the temptation to replace the old absolute with its most abstract moment in which nothing is immediately transformed into all and is therefore totalized. Ultimately, nihilism seems to me to be a crafty form of reasoning, that drives the whole structure of knowledge into the darkness of Nothingness only to receive, through this spectacular, radical negation, still more of the light of the All.

But probably the rumored "nihilism" consists of something much simpler, that is, of a supposed absence of proposals. In other words, one is nihilistic when one persistently refuses to promise a future earthly paradise, to foresee its functioning, to study its organization, to praise its perfection. One is nihilistic when, instead of taking and valuing all the moments of relative freedom offered by this society, one radically negates it, preferring the drastic conclusion that none of it is worth saving. Finally, one is nihilistic when, instead of proposing something constructive, one's activity comes down to an "obsessive exaltation of the destruction of this world." If this is the argument, it is, indeed a meager one.

To begin, anarchism—the idea—is one thing, and the anarchist movement—the ensemble of men and women who support this idea—is another. It makes no sense to me to say of the idea what in reality only a few anarchists assert. The idea of anarchism is the absolute incompatibility between freedom and authority. From this it follows that one can enjoy total freedom in the complete absence of Power. Because Power exists and has no intention of disappearing voluntarily, it will be necessary indeed to create a way to eliminate it. Correct me if I'm mistaken.

I don't understand why such a premise, which no anarchist "nihilist" has ever dreamed of denying and suppressing, must lead necessarily to postulating new social regulations. I don't understand why, in order to "be part" of the anarchist movement, one must first undergo a doctrinal examination in the architecture of the new world, and why it isn't enough to love freedom and hate every form of authority with all that entails. All this is not only absurd from the theoretical point of view, but also false from the historical point of view (and the anarchist rumor-mongers show so much fervor for History). One of the points about which Malatesta and Galleati clashed regularly was precisely the question of whether it was necessary to plan what would be created after the revolution or not. Malatesta argued that anarchists must begin immediately to develop ideas of how to organize social life because it doesn't allow for interruption; Galleati, on the other hand, argued that the task of anarchists was the destruction of this society, and that future generations that are immune to the logic of domination will figure out how to rebuild. In spite of these differences, Malatesta did not accuse Galleati of being nihilist. To make such an accusation would have been gratuitous because their difference was only over the constructive aspect of the question; they agreed completely about the destructive aspect. Though this is omitted by many of his exegeses, Malatesta was, indeed, an insurrectionalist, a confirmed supporter of a violent insurrection capable of demolishing the state.

Today, however, one merely needs to point out that anyone who holds power does not give up their privileges voluntarily and draw the due conclusions to be accused of nihilism. Within the anarchist movement, as everywhere, times change. Whereas once the debate among anarchists dealt with the way of conceiving the revolution, today it seems that all discussion centers around the way to avoid it. What other purpose could all these discussions on self-government, libertarian municipalism, or the blessed utopia of good sense have? It is clear that once one rejects the insurrectional project as such, the destructive hypothesis begins to assume frightful contours. What was only an error to Malatesta—limiting oneself to the demolition of the social order—for many present-day anarchists represents a horror.

When pious souls hear the bark of a dog, they always think that a ferocious wolf is coming. For them the blowing of the wind becomes an approaching tornado. In the same way, to anyone who has entrusted the task of transforming the world to persuasion alone, the word destruction is upsetting to the mind, evoking painful and unpleasant images. These things make a bad impression on the people who, if they are to be converted and finally flock into the ranks of reason, must have a religion that promises an Eden of peace and brotherhood. Whether it deals with paradise, nirvana or anarchy is of little importance. And anyone who dares to place such a religion into question cannot be thought of as simply a non-believer. In the course of things, such a person must be presented as a dangerous blasphemer.

And this is why "we" (but who is this "we"?) are called "nihilists". But the nihilism in all this, what is the point?

AGAINST WAR AND PACIFIST BLISS

Translated from: Neither their war nor their peace, June 1999.

The pacifist abhors war and blesses the state. In times of peace, he has been taught—and he has believed—that society is a vast system of communication where all controls itself by means of dialogue, in a nonviolent manner. It follows from this that only one who, living on the periphery of these communicating vessels, mocks the hopeless cornerstone of vain democratic chattering with blows is candidate to suffer brute force.

Though he implicitly recognizes in this way that this society is not only dialogue but also violence, the pacifist citizen is not excessively worried by this: the violence is destined for others, for the new savages who have not yet acquired a proper communicative humanity and who deduce from this that society is much more violent than the sweet force of words that support a round table. The pacifist elevates the nonviolent image to a supreme principle—in which the peaceful course of capitalist affairs reflects itself—which mediated society gives itself.

When a state starts a war, the pacifist citizen orders it, "in the name of the people", to conform to this idealized representation of daily life. Imbued with that idea of Rights which the state imposes for worship, he refuses to recognize how the state monopoly on violence, that by which countries guarantee the respect *mau militari* of the law corresponds, with armies in state to state relations; and when two powers collide it is war that has the final word. Thus, as she glances with nonchalance on the police reduction of democratic dialogue in the affairs of internal politics, the pacifist citizen insists upon the exclusive use of words in foreign affairs: upon negotiation. He wants one without the other, as if one could be able to have Rights without violence, the state without war, the principle without the consequences that derive from it. Far from recovering from seeing these murderous consequences and from allowing the principle from which they emanate to be put into doubt, the pacifist invokes the principle of Rights against violence—which is the reverse side of it—and draws from this irrational process the moral superiority which he decorates himself with: "What stupidity, war!"

Thus, questioning his own rulers and accusing them of unawareness and irresponsibility, the pacifist would be candid as advisor to the prince with the purpose of shedding light upon the real interests of the nation. And the less he is listened to, the more satisfied he is to have accomplished the proper duty of the citizen: to tell the government what he thinks of public affairs—and so much the worse for the head of state, if he finds himself condemned by moral conscience. As long as the citizen, addressing himself to government, recognizes the legitimacy of the state, the state is able to act more as it pleases because, unlike the pacifist citizen, it does not deny the possibility of compensating for the gaps in its discourse, when necessary, by putting forth its own potential for destruction, flying squad included.

It is in this way that the pacifist has drawn up a separate peace with capitalist society, in which he denounces the "drive" without ever putting it forth for discussion. To this secret complicity corresponds a purely symbolic activity. With his feverish activity, lighting candles, signing call after call, petition after petition, taking his own opinions for a walk on the city sidewalk, the pacifist accomplishes absolutely nothing. The pseudo-activity of the pacifist and of the other propagandists of the "right to..." initiates, more or less consciously, advertising techniques: it assumes that the incessant repetitions of symbolic acts and of reduced slogans able to create an opposition to war and to mobilize the citizens". Nostrously, gratuitous morality sells well in times of war.

The pacifist practice is an extension, by other means, of the Live Aid Concert against world hunger. Placed outside of the production centers of capitalist society, opposition sets itself up in the sphere of entertainment, and of "political pastimes", where the citizen believes in acting as a responsible and autonomous individual, raised from capitalist condition to earn a living. This kind of opposition is not able to get a grasp on social reality because the encounter unfolds itself in a mediated unreality which pretends to be the only reality; while the pacifists produce the images of opposition to war, the mass media reduces this same war to a technological operation, covered with base sentimentality. There are two interpretations, two images of the clash, war and capitalist society, which in the meantime, are left alone and proceed. The curious ease with which the pacifist is transformed once again the next day into simple labor power that must carry out determined tasks results from these images. Moralizers obtain: there's work going on here.

Thus, the atomized individual—who doesn't have any occupation of her own except that of staying aware of the balance of their own pecuniary and emotional bookkeeping—wears the mask of the pacifist citizen from time to time. There, on the public square—or rather on the square of publicity—he proclaims his own high morality against the softness of daily life that she continues to reproduce simultaneously in private and at work. The pacifist is a moralizer in the sphere of mediated unreality and acts without any moral considerations when she is in the production centers of a state, whose wartime defects she denies. This double character of the pacifist is called impotence in the best of cases, in the worst, hypocrisy.

Kula Shells and Zombies: Notes on Value

Power relations are played out on the stage of desire. A valued object is a desired object. Value is a means through which culture effects desire. Ideology and culture effect power relations through the medium of value. Whereas raw coercion is the simple imposition of the desire of one body on another, against the grain of the latter's desire.

Culture and capitalism have become interpenetrating value systems. For capitalism to function it must penetrate culture; it must overcome value systems that contradict it. Previously, the immaterial was outside the domain of capital, however as capital's domain grows and technology changes, it inches further and further into the immaterial. Images and information are now valuable commodities. The range of objects, emotions and concepts that are reduced to a monetary value becomes greater as capital's penetration into culture grows. Our own cultural limitations on capital are shrinking. Justice as an "eye for an eye" is a moral equation which preceded capitalism. Justice is a value system that has yet to be completely subsumed by capitalist logic, but it has become adapted to capital's needs. The blood lust for punishment sold on TV cop shows may function for the benefit of capital but its driving force is distinct from profit. Capitalism was once just one value system among many; now it is the system which attempts to transform all other systems into itself.

When the British and German banana plantation owners first tried to get the Bakweri of West Cameroon to work for them, few Bakweri would submit. Those that avoided plantation work thought that workers were members of a witchcraft association. They believed that the workers killed their relatives and children by turning them into zombies and making them work on some far away mountain, where the witch masters had a modern town. In the 1930s the Bakweri cultivated bananas collectively, and the witchcraft stopped. In the 1960s when the price of bananas

fell the witches came back. The elders said that no one should pick money off the ground because money was being scattered by Frenchmen to draw men to the wasteland where they would be employed as zombies to construct a new harbor. These stories of zombies and witchcraft must have discouraged not a few Bakweri from engaging in wage labor and for a good reason: they are in a sense true stories. Zombies are dead and wage labor sucks the life-blood out of workers. For those that have a non-capitalist system of value circulation and production, wage labor is often incomprehensible and unnecessary. The need for money must be imposed. People only submit to wage labor when they are no longer self sufficient, the theft of peasant lands is often the only thing that will turn peasants into workers. Bakweris that refused to work on plantations continued to understand wage labor from the perspective of their own cultural logic and not that of capital.¹

Cultures that still consider that certain objects can never be sold and thus have exclusively qualitative value, reveal to us the brutal indiscriminability of the general equivalent, by stark contrast. Money is after all the most indiscriminate of whorers. In the New Guinea region, *Kula* arm shells and necklaces circulate among many islands and eventually return to their origin through a series of gift donations. The only time that they are traded is when a young man receives his first *kula* shell. On that occasion the shell can only be traded for specific restricted types of goods and services. *Kula* shells are gifts that cement trade partnerships, but they must eventually be reciprocated if a trade partnership is to continue. *Kula* shells are given names and are said to not ever die, their origin and path is remembered; they therefore bring fame to *kula* givers. The giving and receiving of *kula* shells structures a trade network of *kula* shells structures a trade network to acquire goods; they also generate prestige for the donor. Thus this trade network does not only produce economic value but also social value.

The prestige gained by giving *kula* shells cannot be compared with the status acquired with the purchase of a consumer item. In New Guinea prestige is gained slowly, through a complex of relationships; it has nothing in common with status that can be immediately bought. The day the *kula* shell is traded for money the entire value system and trade network regulated by the *kula* shell will begin to travel down the path of its own destruction.

The Tiv of central Nigeria divided valued objects into three categories: consumer goods, prestige goods, and women and children. When the money economy intervened in the Tiv economy, money was categorized as an object of prestige. Money crossed over the traditional boundaries between categories because it began to be used to buy consumer goods by male merchants when previously only women dealt in consumer goods. This is just one of innumerable examples in which money has inserted itself into a non-capitalist economy and broken down its categories of value.²

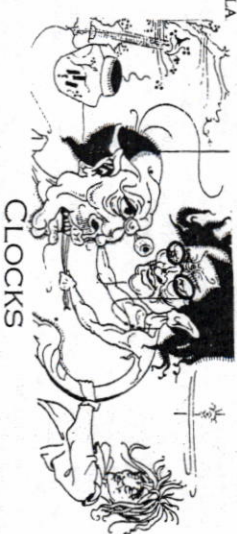
Capitalism becomes hegemonic by bending other systems of value to its logic. Capitalism is a virus but it does not mean that there aren't those who produce its antibodies. To Kill King Akéas is to destroy the capitalist equation, the mechanism of value that is trying to reduce life itself to a mere quantity. There are moments in which culture slows the spread of capital, where cultural systems of value resist their own transformation into capitalist value. But this does not mean that non-capitalist forms of value are therefore liberatory. Culture is an ineffective weapon against authority. Culture codifies relationships and is a means through which authority is constructed. Culture, capital, justice and law all have their own scales to weigh behavior. They measure, judge and channel human action; they are all coercive. In the absence of value systems desire abounds in new directions. Insurrection is desire rebelling against value.

The Machiguenga of the Peruvian amazon are unusual in their strong preference against living in any community larger than the immediate family.³ When outsiders visit the Machiguenga, it is common for them to explain "no somos muy unidos aquí". They expect outsiders to be surprised that they prefer to live away from concentrated settlements. The Machiguenga are settling in towns more and more often in order to send their children to school and because they are becoming increasingly dependent on iron tools which they need access to outside markets to acquire. In the 70s interviews with Machiguenga town dwellers revealed that most people begrudgingly made this change. Previously most Machiguenga hunted, gathered and farmed with their immediate families. They met up with nearby families for beer feasts and for fishing expeditions. When asked why they preferred not to live in a community they generally had two answers: they had greater access to forest resources in smaller groups, and community living brought unwanted restrictions. The Machiguenga language lacks terms for social categories. Other Amazonian groups have complex political ranking systems but the Machiguenga borrow social terms from nearby groups. They have no term for family. There is a word for kin but only *egacene* kin, and they use a borrowed word *neashaniza* or my people for those that live nearby. Some anthropologists have suggested that the Machiguenga live in very small groups because of a dispersion that occurred after the epidemics of colonial times. But their lack of social terms suggests that this is not the case. There is no evidence that the Machiguenga ever had political terminology.

The Machiguenga are not only hunter-gatherers (they also farm), and they are certainly no longer "pristine" primitives, but this is not the point. I am offering them as an example that primitive communism may have existed during the Paleolithic but exclusively as an absence of private property. Living peoples show us that in all probability Paleolithic peoples lived in various types of social formations ranging from the more communal to the more dispersed. This is of course all speculation, but the case of the Machiguenga challenges the utopian image of primitive communism, the idea that human beings naturally prefer to live collectively. This idea is a reaction to the fragmentation we experience in a society dominated by capital, we crave the relations we lack and assume the opposite of capitalism is the collective.

Let's keep the utopian visions that expand our possibilities and discard the rigid models that limit us. To proceed away from the established into the unknown we must have a thought process which is expansive. We must direct our thought back towards its subjective root and away from the scarcity of options dished up for us by capital. To explore life's possibilities outside these narrow confines we need to have the courage to discard impoverished visions of that which lies beyond the existent.

¹ References to the Machiguenga are based on the unpublished manuscript: The Machiguenga: In Nature and Culture by Allen Johnson at UCLA



A fuma had a wall clock, and each week he wound it VERY VERY CAREFULLY. A cronopio passed and noting this, he began to laugh and went home and invented an antichoke clock, or rather a wild antichoke clock, for it can and ought to be called both ways.

This cronopio's wild antichoke clock is a wood antichoke of the larger species, fastened by its stem to a hole in the wall. Its innumerable leaves indicate what hour it is, all the hours in fact, in such a way that the cronopio has only to pluck a leaf to know what time it is. So he continues plucking them from left to right, always the leaf corresponds to that particular hour, and everyday the cronopio begins pulling off a new layer of leaves. When he reaches the center, time cannot be measured, and in the infinite violet-rose of the antichoke heart the cronopio finds great contentment. Then he cuts it with oil, vinegar, and salt and puts another clock in the hole.

-Julio Cortazar

¹ Taussig, Michael T. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.
² Mazon, Nancy D. *The Fume of Grass: The Symbolic Study of Value Transformation in a Massim (Papua New Guinea) Society*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1986.
³ Dedeux, Gilles and Gnanan, Felix. *Antichoke*. New York: Viking Penguin Press, 1977, pp. 176.

From Thought into the unknown

How is thought cut from its root?

When we think of the imagination what comes to mind? We might think of human creativity at its source, of a living and thinking person. We also might think of the imaginary, a realm that is separate from this world we live in, daydreams that are divorced from our lives: fantasies that serve only as escape mechanisms, fantasies that are filled with mass media produced images of other planets, green aliens with 14 fingers, or sex with bionic humanoids with geometric silicone features. The word imagination has been corroded along with its root word: the image. The images that confront us everyday appear to have no human origin. They are created for the market, and have the qualities of the market, they leave little trace of their human creators. When we see an ad for Apple computers we do not think of the person who put the advertising image together. That person is probably thousands of miles away. That distant worker expressed little of their personality in the image they created. So, as was intended, we think only of apple computers. That image was the expression of a thwarted and recuperated creative impulse of someone sitting at an office far away. Creativity that increases one's own life possibilities is now rarely respected. When someone comes up with a particularly inventive idea, people have the gall to say, "you should market that". Capitalism is such an effective system because it so effectively channels and uses human creativity for its own aims. In the process, it reduces creativity to as colorless a process as the money transaction. It reduces the individuality of creativity to a minimum. This uniformity is also a result of the monotony of life in a society filled with mass produced objects, images and spaces; as life becomes more uniform thought follows closely behind.

The fact that the imaginary can be thought of as divorced from an imagining subject reflects the degree to which the fragmentation we experience in our daily lives has implanted itself in our very thought process. When every creative impulse has been severed from its subjective source and channeled into the markets of technological and cultural production, when there is no one to share our insights with because only marketed creativity is given a place to be seen or heard, there is no need for censorship. This dismembering results in thoughts that lead away from the subject, it crushes the will, produces atomized desires for commodities, and results in actions that do not expand our own lives but the life of the vampire that feeds upon us. Instead of increasing our own power, our thoughts lead us to travel a straight line between the place where we puke out fuel for the market, stop by supermarket to buy its refuse, and go home where we eat its shit. In order to interrupt this process it is necessary to change our very thought process, we need to reconnect thought to its source: the thinking subject. In order to do so we must expel the poltergeists that haunt us, poltergeists that bear a suspicious resemblance to those in a Steven Spielberg movie.

For thought to become an instrument to the expansion of one's life projectability, it is helpful to find others with whom to speak a language other than that of the market, with whom one can explore life's possibilities outside the limited choices offered by capital. If there is no language with which to express ones thoughts, and no one to speak to, thought will not be a sharpened tool but a dull implement. In this society, one who along with a few like-minded companions aims to increase life's potential, will quickly run into obstacles in her path. This society is a maze of barriers to anyone that wishes to function outside of it, anyone who wishes to live by their own rhythm and not that of the clock. To destroy the obstacles to our own expansion we need all of the tools we can get; we need both ideas and fire.

Where do we go from here? The utopian imagination

To move towards the destruction of this society and the creation of new relations, we need to have a clear conception of how to proceed from here, but we do not need a concrete model of where we will end up. Although any future world would contain traces or ruins of this society, that world may be beyond our present capacity to imagine. It is important to ask ourselves whether or not an idea increases or decreases our possibilities. When does an idea become a fossilized model that limits us? Utopian visions can be useful openings out of the present order but they can also confine us. The Paleolithic has been a useful reference because it breaks us out of the dominant idea that human beings by nature need to create institutions of authority. Living hunter gatherers have also shown us that anarchy is a real possibility, not merely a utopian dream, and that in fact it is most probable that humans lived in anarchy for most of their past. But when we begin to create a utopian image on the specific practices of hunter-gatherers we are creating a primitivist model with inherent limitations; such an image limits our vision of what a future world could be. Also, it is improbable that people throughout the world during the Paleolithic actually behaved predictably enough for any such model to be based on such multifarious relations. Living hunter-gatherers have a variety of types of social relations. What these people have in common is the absence of odious institutions of authority, the absence of exploitation. Beyond that each group has its own characteristics, its own choice of social relations. Perhaps the greatest lesson that living hunter-gatherers as a whole teach us is found in their lack of predictability: a variety of relations that cannot be contained in precise models.



Nuestro Pan De Cada Dia... Mocoloco
Our Daily Bread...

ENTER...

ENTER...

[A new magazine has recently appeared in Italy called *Diavolo in Corpo*. It is a magazine of anarchist ideas that is intended to get beyond the anarchist ghetto. The following text is a translation of the introduction the publishers of this magazine wrote for it. It is printed here as an introduction to the ideas of certain of the insurrectional anarchists of Italy.]

To have the devil in the body. Here is an expression that has fortunately survived from its medieval origins. The last witch burned on the pyre of the inquisition, the devil has continued to creep into the body of human beings to shake them from the torpor of their existence. Indeed, something of the sulphurous remains in this idiom, an odor of heresy. To have the devil in the body means being in continual motion, not knowing a moment of reprieve, of quiet: refusing to lie down on custom. It has nothing to do with the frenzy to which modern life invites us. On the contrary, the fibrillation of the life invites us. When it is not adherence to external speed, but a spark that exceeds every utilitarian expectation—is customarily looked at with suspicion, considered a pathology. Possession, obsession, fanaticism: many

are the descriptions with which the defenders of *that which* have liquidated the lovers of *that which* is not. But the recourse to diagnosis without appeal announces in the first place the embarrassment of anyone who finds herself facing a condition of perpetual motion that is not the fruit of logical choice, but of visceral action. Not that one would want to say that to have the devil in the body means not to possess one's own reasons; on the contrary. These reasons exist and even have solid bases. Provided that the foundation of the projection into the future of desires that would want to be carried out lets them through to the enchantment of their life, to their immediate substance. All knowledge and understanding do not put enough words together to ease the burning of that which we lack, a life to invent. Like many before us, we think that no possibility, even if it is the most unreal, will ever be able to be outlawed or rejected beforehand, no part of life will ever be able to be condemned to death. If that one expands, ever more limited, of unknown places does not remain on the earth, it is within the individual himself that a world in motion and without limits opens, the exploration of which has barely begun. Rather it runs the risk of beginning

wakes the vertigo as come across it, ting herself that the external reality that astonial vertigo into centuries the passion the human being, and a sought relief in art or accepts the dream into en, utilizing it in doses able to cause burns



themselves. Safety above all. This is the creed of a world that prefers the pension to adventure. Now anyone who is not satisfied with comfort that only the domestic walls of habit are in a position to give him finds herself in the unpleasant situation of having to create the other: another way to think, another way to feel, another way to live. This other is vulnerable to criticism and to drooleries from anyone who brags about having his feet on the ground, because it ventures beyond the verifiable facts. And since the accountability of giving and of having that scans our days on earth demands that we all balance our accounts, it often happens that one willingly dedicates only the season of adolescence to the persistent search for freedom. The desire to rebel is an infantile disorder: how many times we have heard it repeated. Yet in every epoch, in every circle, the tyranny of objective reality has known its own ageless outlaws. Individuals and ideas that, referring to Utopia, or to the Impossible, or to the Unknown, or to the Marvelous—the name devoted them matters little—have sought to escape the (un)quick sand* in which they were trapped by the means that they had at their disposal. Today, a

fine example of the (un)quick sand* is furnished to us by the dominant thinking. It's inactivity cannot amaze anyone: it is the necessary consequence of a perspective dictated by the indispensable need to preserve the foundations of the world in which we live, the world of authority and of the commodity. In order to mold the world to its own image and profit, power must make the existing order appear natural. As eternal, define them as proper to all societies, for the purpose of establishing Progress, Money, Work, Democracy, State, as if it were a question of absolute concepts. The purpose is to spread the inner persuasion everywhere and within everyone that the world has always been this way and always will be, and that it will never know a rupture, an upheaval, a revolution. The world in which we live is thus presented to us as the ripe fruit of a linear progress that has brought us from the hell of primitivity to the paradise of civilization, and no one has the right to bring this up for discussion. As for the alternatives to this one-way thought, they appear to us to portray the unfaithful shadow. They limit themselves to demanding a different outline of the form within the substantial identity of content: a left government, an alternative to a right government, thirty-five hours of work as an alternative to forty hours of work weekly, organic merchandise as an alternative to adulterated merchandise, and so forth. Realism is the tomb of Utopia, but the last hope of politics, of work, of the market. And to us—to us who, to stay with the example, wish the end of every government, all work, every market—nothing is left but to build castles in the air. Or else to try to demolish those that are on earth. It has already been said many times that a theory critical of society possesses no concepts that can build a bridge between the present and the future, offers no promises, shows no outcomes, but remains destructive. Indeed if we could formulate a concrete idea of the alternative, it would not be that of an alternative: the possibilities of the other world are so remote and incongruous with respect to the universe of today as to defy every attempt to identify it within the boundaries of this universe. This is why, at the very moment that we take the floor to question everything, whoever listens to us is certain to hear nothing. But nothing else is possible. Any one who is declared by the roar of identical days and signs that follow one after the other will never succeed in catching our murmur. If we trust our flow to superficially banal reflections, it is because we have not yet reached to all of the depths. If we recite apparently mysterious formulae it is to awaken the demons that reside in most of us. Here we will record the incarnations. Here we will retrace the appearances. We will try to evoke the strength from them as well as the reasons.

“(Un)quick sand is the closest I could come to expressing the Italian word-play. The term in Italian was sabble (in)mobil. Sabble mobili is quick sand, but literally means moving sand—thus, here the speak of unmoving sand which nonetheless traps one.

jobs”—living as assimilated members of society. And what of this separated realm, art? Artists (including poets and musicians) generally view themselves as a creative elite, exhibiting a sense of self-importance that can make them unbearable. This is not just a personality quirk. It goes with the social role of “artist,” for although its function has changed, art remains an activity of social reproduction. It maintains creative activity as a realm of specialists—other people may dabble in it as a hobby, but only the “truly creative” few can actually be artists. Thus art produces a tendency in most people to suppress their own creativity as inadequate or to channel it into the production of irrelevant artifacts for passive consumption by the “talentless.”

The alienation of individuals from their creative urges that is necessary for the rise and maintenance of civilization has another manifestation. The creative energy that is suppressed comes to be attributed to a “higher realm.” Within the context of society as we know it, this energy only seems to express itself very occasionally and in very directed ways. The myriads of tiny, daily expressions of creativity by which we all take back as many moments of our lives as we can are not recognized as creative because they are not separated from life. So it is very easy to attribute creative energy to inspiration, to supposed revelation from a spiritual realm. It is this realm, under the title “god” that is credited as creator—the source of all creation. Our creative, experimental urges are not our own, but allegedly a gift from god to be used in accordance with his/her/its will. Experimentation outside the divinity determined parameters is hubris, arrogance, sin or diabolical crime. Religion

(including “spirituality,” religion’s hipper, mellower face) developed as a means for enforcing the constraints necessary for social reproduction. Within any given social context, what “god” allows will be what is deemed necessary for or helpful to the reproduction of that social context. So, for example, many Christians see nuclear weapons as a gift from god, but consider creative methods of theft or unusual sexual practices to be sinful and arrogant. Many radical environmentalists are also religious, embracing neo-pagan or animistic belief systems. In their belief systems, “god” becomes “nature.” Hubris consists of creating “against nature.” For the followers of these nature religions, much is forbidden that is not forbidden in mainstream religions and vice versa, but both agree that creative energy does not belong to the individual to use as she chooses, but is to be exercised only in service to the deity.

In order to claim that it is possible to use the creative urge “against nature,” the radical environmentalist must turn “nature” into a metaphysical entity that we can defy. But “nature” is just a convenient shorthand for the sum of the beings, actions and interactions that make up this world. Therefore, civilization and its technology are not “unnatural.” The problem with civilization and the technological system is that they exist only by suppressing the individual urge to create and experiment, forcing it into the narrow conduit of social reproduction. The civilized social system has always been a detriment to the full development of individuals as creators of their own lives and interactions—it has in fact always suppressed this development through a combination of vicious attacks and subtle but thorough manipulation.

But now it has reached the point where civilization threatens our health and our very existence and is robbing us quickly of an amazing wealth of diverse interactions by turning the world into a homogeneous machine—a machine that may soon have no need for actual creativity at all, but may be able to let it be subsumed completely into productivity and commodity consumption.

The urge to create, explore and experiment most certainly exists in all humans and in many other mammals. It may exist in every living being on some level. Yet many human societies never developed into civilizations with complex technological systems. No other mammal has ever developed such a monstrosity. This shows that the creative urge can be exercised in ways that do not produce such systems. In fact, those of us who want to be able to fully create our lives and interactions as our own, who do not want to spend our lives as cogs in a social machine, and who, therefore, want to destroy this machine in its totality, turning civilization and its technology into ruins, must grasp this urge, this energy, as our own, possibly our most essential weapon in the war against society. Unconstrained creative activity and experimentation in the hands of individuals, used for their own pleasure, does not need to be feared. Such activity did not create the present civilization and will not create any future civilizations. And the destruction of civilization, this system of social control that is smothering the planet, and the creation of our lives and interactions as so completely our own that they cannot be socialized, systematized or otherwise alienated from us will require explorations and experiments with the possible that go far beyond anything we have yet tried.



CIVILIZATION AND THE CREATIVE URGE

I do not accept the concept of an essential "human nature"—of any essential feature that unifies all humans and separates "us" from other creatures. However, I do think that for humans, the full enjoyment of life depends upon creative activity and experimentation by which we transform our environment. We lack speed innate weapons like claws, fangs and horns, etc., but we have a brain capable of imagining amazing things. Clearly the greatest enjoyment in life for the human individual can be found in the least restricted, most open experimentation with one's creative urges.

Unfortunately, much of the anti-technology, anti-civilization tendency has gotten itself entangled in an environmentalist/radical ecologist ideology that condemns the free expression of our creative and experimental urges. In light of the disastrous effects of the technological system, this is an understandable reaction, but that's all it is—a *reaction*—not an intelligent response. This wedding of anti-civilization theory to radical environmentalist ideology has nearly drowned the possibility of making this theory intelligently in a quagmire of moralism and self-sacrifice. Our creative and experimental urges are to be suppressed and subjected to "Nature"—that metaphysical and very civilized conception we have of that which exists outside of civilization. According to this morality, "natural" is good and "artificial" is evil, and the artificiality of this dichotomy is completely missed. But is our urge to create and experiment to blame for this mess we call civilization? Or is it a victim of constraints that have chained us to a system of authority that suppresses all creativity that it cannot channel into social reproduction?

When self-created interactions between individuals are displaced

by social relationships based upon roles which designate functions within a society, it seems inevitable that certain roles would take on increasing responsibility for, and so greater control over, social reproduction. In other words, authority develops. It may well be that authority develops precisely because unconstrained expressions of the urge to create and experiment threaten social stability. In any case, creative energy, though continuing to reside in the individual, no longer belongs to the individual, but rather belongs to the society—which, in practice, means the authorities who control that society, who direct this energy, this urge, toward social reproduction.

Technology is a huge system, an entire social landscape, which constrains the creative urge of individuals keeping it in rein. The urge to experiment moves individuals to create tools and methods that allow them to get what they want with the greatest ease or pleasure, but such tools and methods do not make a technological system, because they are in the service of the individual. Within a social context, tools and methods will develop that have nothing to do with fulfilling the wants of individuals as such, but rather serve to reproduce the social context. In order to serve this purpose, they coalesce into a system of interactive and mutually dependent tools and methods. It is this system and its products that can rightly be called technology. Although this system does not exist in order to fulfill the needs of individuals, it does create a dependence within individuals upon it for survival, because this is necessary to keep individuals in thrall to social reproduction. And this survival becomes separated from and ultimately opposed to intense and enjoyable living. (Agriculture doubled the time which had to be dedicated to production of basic needs and put

these activities on a strict seasonal time schedule, making them unquestionably *work*. The industrial revolution drastically increased work time and intensified the rigidity of its schedule.) The tedium produced by this system, which begins by constraining creative energy, finally suppresses it, transforming it into mere productivity. Technology and civilization do not have their origin in the urge to create and experiment, but rather in the need of the authorities to constrain this urge in order to maintain social reproduction and control.

But the civilized social order with its technological material basis cannot completely suppress this experimental, creative urge both because it needs domesticated, channeled creativity in order to reproduce and expand itself, and because some individuals simply do not let their creative urges be completely suppressed. As civilization has expanded into a globally dominant totality, it has become necessary to find a place for these individuals. Art was originally a technology—an integrated system of tools and methods used in the process of social reproduction. It was mostly used in ritual and political propaganda. In the early modern era (the 16th and 17th centuries), the function of art began to change. Though artists continue, even now, to create works to order for churches and political institutions, as well as for those with the wealth to buy their skill and creativity, art is now generally viewed as area for individual creative expression. Artists imagine that their creative urge has been liberated from its subjection to social reproduction. But this "liberated activity" is only permitted within to exist in a separated, specialized realm, a realm apart from daily life. In their daily lives, artists continue using money, paying rent, usually holding down "straight



DROWNING

Drowning...
A death in which one is completely overcome by a natural force too great for one to fight...

I think drowning has its special significance because the force surrounds the victim, encompasses her, ingests him and turns her into a part of itself. While there are similarities to death by fire, which also consumes its victims, fire lacks the apparent infinity of the sea, and the victim has freedom of motion limited only by her own fear, at least until asphyxiation causes him to lose consciousness. But one who drowns finds himself to be the plaything of the sea, forced to partake in its fluidity of motion. Certainly the drowning one will struggle against the power of the sea. But to what avail? Her motions are conformed to the desires of the sea; his struggles merely lead to exhaustion and limp acceptance. The motions, the currents, the fluid tidal dance possess one's body and take it where they will. I imagine one's mind is also slowly possessed by the aqueous dream and slowly drifts along toward inevitable oblivion. Who does not imagine the drowning victim dreamy-eyed and languid? Do not forget that we are mostly water. Doesn't it make sense then that such a death would seem, in our imaginations, to simply be a return to our source? Maybe this is why we attribute calm and peace to the last moments of one who drowns. I have heard people speak of this as if it were a known established truth, even a scientific fact. But of course, no one knows. The drowned do not return to tell the tale of their last moments. So such a "truth" must be understood poetically, as a reflection of our view of the sea and of our own unperceived fluidity.

We are strange creatures. We desire... we need... to separate ourselves from the infinity, to find our own uniqueness and color all the infinite worlds with it, in this way making them our own. But such a task is daunting. And more so as social constructs developed by those in power in their attempts to dominate this process channel our endeavors into mere reproduction of this social system which drains the infinity of color and of its infinitude, leaving us with lifeless matter and lifeless lives.

Then the appeal of losing ourselves once more in the infinite, of drowning ourselves, comes to the fore—the appeal of religion. Surely by this time, the absurdity of religion has been exposed a million times over, both practically and through intellectual argument. Yet in these desolate and dreamless times, its appeal is on the rise. The anguish of living as a unique individual without the possibility of creating the universe in one's own image, coloring the infinite marvelous from which one has extracted oneself, with a beauty that enhances the world and one's own life, makes oblivion attractive. And the oblivion offered by religion, drowning in the waters of baptism, is far less frightening to most people than the absolute and final oblivion of suicide. But those who choose the oblivion of religion are not merely cowards, but traitors to themselves and to all who strive for self-realization, because religion—however soft and malleable its form (even in the guise of spirituality, that insidious thief which steals the marvelous from the physical world and encrusts it with belief, destroying its fluid and convulsive beauty)—is part of the social system that stole our creativity from us to construct the monstrous, gray nightmare that surrounds, this mad civilization that replaces creativity with production, free activity with work, vibrant living interactions with technological and bureaucratic mediation. This explains how religion is an opiate: it makes us oblivious to the anguish of our suppressed uniqueness and creativity, allowing us to forget the damage without curing it. It numbs us to the point where we accept the damage and its cause, civilization in its totality. One can see how certain forms of atheism—its stalinist and marxist forms as well as the 19th century rationalist forms touted by the American Atheist followers of Madelyn Murray O'Hare—can be religious. Atheism only avoids religiosity by having an existential as opposed to a dogmatic basis—that is as a willful decision to refuse god rather than a belief in no god. And the willful refusal of god has its basis precisely in the decision to extract ourselves from the infinite—that is the mass—and to live to the full the singularity of our being, drawing the universe into ourselves as our own and, thus, creating the marvelous in all its poetic beauty...the decision to pull ourselves from the sea so that we may come to know and love it with the fullness of our own unique being as only those who refuse to drown can.

Necrophilic logics and the revolt of the imagination

A split between the rational and irrational is constructed by every rational system; each rationality creates a corresponding irrationality, that which does not fit inside of it. Therefore each rational system has inherent limits. To break out of a dominant rationality one must also be capable of conceiving of that which lies beyond the limits of that system. Rational systems can be useful tools but they can also become mental prisons.

Some wish to reject all rational systems because they detect specific types of rationality, such as capitalist mechanized society where nearly everything has been ascribed a monetary value, where urban and rural spaces are ravaged by the needs of capital while human beings are left in aid lifeless environments drinking chemical laden drinks in cafes with subdued music. This leads some people to crave the irrational: the chaotic. One can only listen to music so long, before becoming filled with a desire to burn down the places that play fast music so that we will drink our drinks faster and leave. But it is not the irrational that can subvert capitalist rationality, capitalism also has its irrational side and, like all rational systems capital creates its own irrational limit. We can find a more powerful source of subversion in our minds' imagination than in artificial splits created by the rationalities we wish to destroy. Imagination can show us well thought out ways burn down that Starbucks and not get caught. Imagination breaks out of habitual and necrophilic logics: imagination is anti-hegemonic.

The surrealists experimented with imaginative flights outside of necrophilic logics. Alejo Carpentier was a Cuban novelist that was friends with the Surrealists while he lived in Paris in the 20s and 30s. His writing reflects a surrealist influence but he found the surreal in history and everyday life, specifically American

life and history.¹ Miguel Angel Asturias wrote fantastic versions of Mayan myths upon returning to Guatemala from Paris. The French surrealists and Latin American surrealist influenced writers attempted to break out of "Western" rationality in fundamentally different ways. The French surrealists emphasized the imagination of the subconscious whereas Carpentier and Asturias set the subconscious aside. These two writers looked to the indigenous and African cultures in their own countries and regions, to cultural logics which were less subsumed by the "Western" rationality the surrealists so criticized. Both Asturias and Carpentier were white, educated, city dwellers who were looking at these cultures from the outside and thus often romanticized them. Each culture's logic leaves openings that other cultures close. This is most obvious in the case of moral logic; one culture restricts that which another condones. However, this method of subversion is inherently limited since it is merely replacing one code with another. These two writers looked to other cultures for openings, for opportunities closed by their own cultures.

Carpentier thought that life contained realities that were much more shocking than the dreams of the surrealists. He looked away from the subconscious and found the marvelous real in the creative choices of human life. The ways in which the conscious imagination can subvert established rationalities are more willful and thus more powerful than what we can extract from the subconscious.

In the novel *The Kingdom of this World* Carpentier tells us a story of the overthrow of the French rule in Haiti and its aftermath. He went to the archives in Haiti to research the novel yet the story is written with trajectories into the physically

¹ "Lo real-maravilloso se encuentra en cada paso en las vidas de hombres que inscribieron fechas en la historia del continente...." Carpentier. In Spanish, America is one continent from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego. America does NOT mean the U.S.

impossible. He shows us the rule of Henri-Cristophe (after the removal of the French) as deranged yet following political logic. His abuses of power are perpetrated by a deranged man who is mad yet upholds the state's logic of repression and exploitation enough to function as a statesman. The state, like capitalism appears to be hyper-rational but is sometimes terrifyingly irrational. Carpentier's conception of the marvelous real challenges the separation between the real and unreal as well as between the rational and irrational.

Carpentier also uses fights of marvelous realism in which humans fly or turn into animals but he bases this in voodoo beliefs, it is indistinguishable whether he is saying that a man flew away when he was about to be executed or if people merely believed this to be true. He therefore describes the physically impossible as rational, as fitting within voodoo's logic. The physical metamorphoses of Mackandal, an instigator of the insurrection, are accepted as normal by the characters. The novel is about the first anti-colonial insurrection that overthrew European rule in America, which was also a generalized slave revolt. The slaves find the insurrection more unbelievable than humans turning into animals. Voodoo was already generally accepted as having real power, while insurrection brought what was previously inconceivable. Property was temporarily effectively abolished and what had been the slave-owners' assets became the loot of the slaves.

After bathing their arms in the blood of the white man, the Negroes ran toward the big house, shouting death to the master, to the governor, to God, and to all the Frenchmen in the world. But driven by a longstanding thirst, most of them rushed to the cellar looking for liquor. Pick blows demolished kegs of salt fish. Their staves spinning, casks began to gush wine, reddening the women's skirts. Snatched up with shouts and shoves, the demons of brandy, the carboys of rum, were splintered against the wall laughing and scuffling, the Negroes went sliding through pickled tomatoes, capers, herring roe, and marmos on the brick floor, a slime thinned by a stream of rancid oil

flowing from a skin bag. -- Carpentier *The Kingdom of this World*.

Revolt creates situations that are as outside of established reality as is magic.² Revolt is marvelously real because it demands the impossible. Only willed imagination has the power to crush the conceptions and relations that perpetuate the status quo.

Capitalist logic is necrophilic because it reduces life itself to a quantity. This logic brought to its extreme conclusion would result in the annihilation of life on this planet. The crudest examples of this reduction are the selling of forests or human organs for a price, more insidious is the reduction of time to a monetary value. Selling time for a number brings living death. Homogenous time brings abstractly equivalent moments; a flat expanse of seconds and minutes and hours spreads out in front of us. According to the clock every 5:33 PM is the same. The logics of law and morality creep their way into our heads restricting and representing, but rationalization is never total, human desires and actions perpetually elude domestication and classification. There is always a tension between desire and the logics which constrain it, whether they be economic, political or moral. The revolt of the imagination rebels against necrophilic logics as well as their most obvious results, such as police and the state.



² Marvelous realism is also referred to as magical realism.